

The Listener

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Scientific Research and Social Needs—VI

Science Speeds Up Communications

By JULIAN HUXLEY

THE first fact about communications is that they changed hardly at all for about two thousand years, and then were suddenly plunged into a period of revolutionary change, which is still in full blast, by the applications of human inventiveness and, in an ever-increasing proportion as time went on, of science.

Until the end of the eighteenth century, the roads of England were no better than in Roman times. Pack animals were still used in some parts of England as the main means of transport within living memory. Shipping showed rather more improvement; but it was not until the introduction of steam power and iron hulls that the big change came. The speed at which information could be transmitted did not alter materially until the introduction of railways, and not very materially until the time of the electric telegraph. Even the original telegraph, the semaphore system by which messages were sent from the south coast to London in about a minute during the Napoleonic Wars, is paralleled by the drum signalling of many quite primitive peoples. The one big change that came in before the industrial era was in the communication of ideas. Here, the invention of printing, which was the first example of mass-production methods, did really affect a revolutionary change several centuries earlier.

Now let us take a few threads and see where they run and how they pull on other threads. I suppose most people would agree that the internal combustion engine has effected the biggest single change in transport after the

introduction of steam, since it brought into being both the motor-car and the aeroplane, not to mention motor-ships. The idea of using an explosion of gas or vapour to drive an engine grew directly out of the fundamental research on gases and on the nature of combustion which went on in the eighteenth century. Proposals for engines of this type were actually made and patented as early as 1794, but no workable type was produced, even of a stationary engine, until after the middle of last century, and vehicles with internal combustion engines have less than fifty years' history. After an infancy in which they were jeered at, motors became a luxury, and then, largely thanks to Mr. Ford, a necessity of everyday convenience and pleasure, whether in the form of privately-owned cars or motor-buses. Largely since the War, motor vehicles have claimed an increasing share of goods transport. All this is an outcome of the work of the scientific pioneers who found out how to make different pure gases, and discovered that some of them would explode violently if ignited in the presence of air. Its consequences are varied and enormous.

For one thing, it has made new demands upon the road. Those of you who are middle-aged can remember the funny business it was in pre-War days of preparing for a ride in a car, by swathing yourselves in veils and dustcoats against the horrible clouds of dust. That simply couldn't continue; and the demand for dust suppression has turned our roads from white to black (though concrete is turning some of them white again).

Similarly, there was a demand on the roads for safety

from skidding, for the straightening out of bends, for proper banking, for ability to stand up to much heavier and speedier traffic. A lot of haphazard experiment was done on this, which has eventually crystallised into real research at the Road Research Station now under the Department of

distinguished academic scientist whom they invited from one of the older universities a few years back. Here, too, let me give a couple of examples. Every unnecessary expenditure must of course be rigorously excluded. Obviously, one of the biggest items of expenditure by a

railway is on coal—the L.M.S., for instance, buys nearly £5 millions worth of coal a year! So if you can make the same amount of coal drive a train further, you are making a big economy. Air resistance is one of the big factors, especially at high speeds, so the L.M.S. arranged with the National Physical Laboratory to have a model of the Royal Scot, complete with tender and six coaches, tested in the wind tunnels which were built primarily for research on aeroplanes. The test showed that the Royal Scot, at sixty miles an hour, without any headwind, was using up about four hundred horse-power—over a quarter of the total power it was expending—in overcoming air resistance. The tests also showed the exact share of the engine, tender, and coaches in producing the air resistance. This test was, of course, the starting point for new designs aimed at reducing this terrific amount of resistance by proper streamlining.

The research undertaken by a railway is varied—the L.M.S., among other items, is busy with work on steel, on copper for fireboxes, on water-softening processes to

prevent scale in boilers, and on the best methods of painting. You probably would not think that painting railway carriages would offer much scope for science, but by careful research they have arrived at a new paint which will last a great deal longer, and, by prolonging the time a



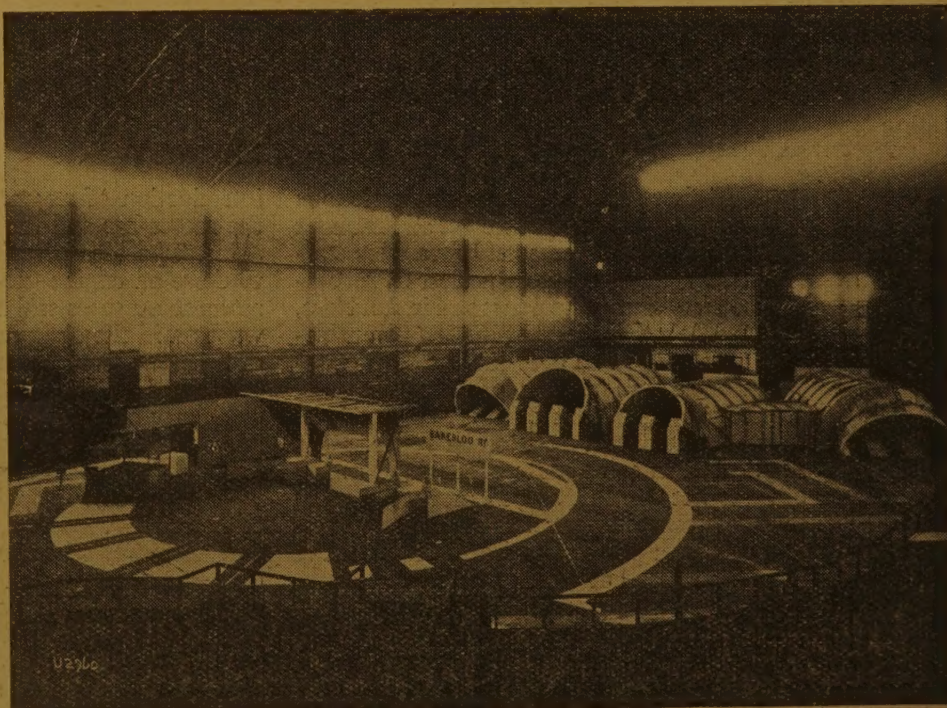
New type of streamlined motor-bus, seating 60 people

By courtesy of the Associated Equipment Co.

Scientific and Industrial Research, at Harmondsworth. Motorists on the Colnbrook bye-pass will probably recollect a spot where there are two sections of road side by side. One of these is an experimental road, which is used to test out different types of road materials and construction under practical conditions. The laboratory is close by. All sorts of problems are being tackled here, but, as the station is still very young, little has reached the full practical stage. I will only mention two. They are busy with the design of a machine which will really measure road-wear, but they must have something which will in a few days or weeks produce on an experimental road the same sort of effect that actual traffic will produce on a real road in the course of years.

Then there is the whole problem of accidents; over six thousand fatal ones every year in this country! Of these a large number are due to skidding; and every motorist knows what a difference there is between various road surfaces as regards liability to skid. A machine has now been designed to express this liability in quantitative terms. It consists of a sidecar combination which can be made to drag along at an angle, and in which the force needed for such a drag can be recorded. With this, samples of different surfaces can be quickly tested out and compared as regards their skid-ability.

But all this activity on the road had its effects on the railways. To take one example, the L.M.S. has now large scientific laboratories, where the most varied kinds of research are carried out. The work is under the charge of a



Scientific planning in the field of transport—full-scale model of various parts of the Piccadilly Tube Station, erected at Earl's Court

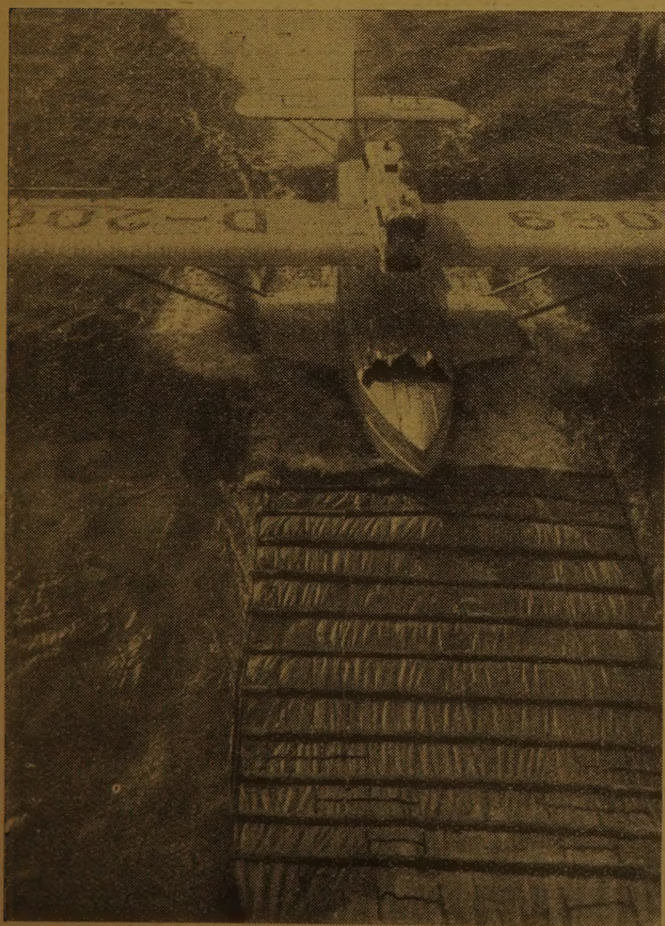
Topical Press

carriage can be in use between its periodic visits to the repair shops, will effect savings that seem destined to be in the neighbourhood of one hundred thousand pounds a year!

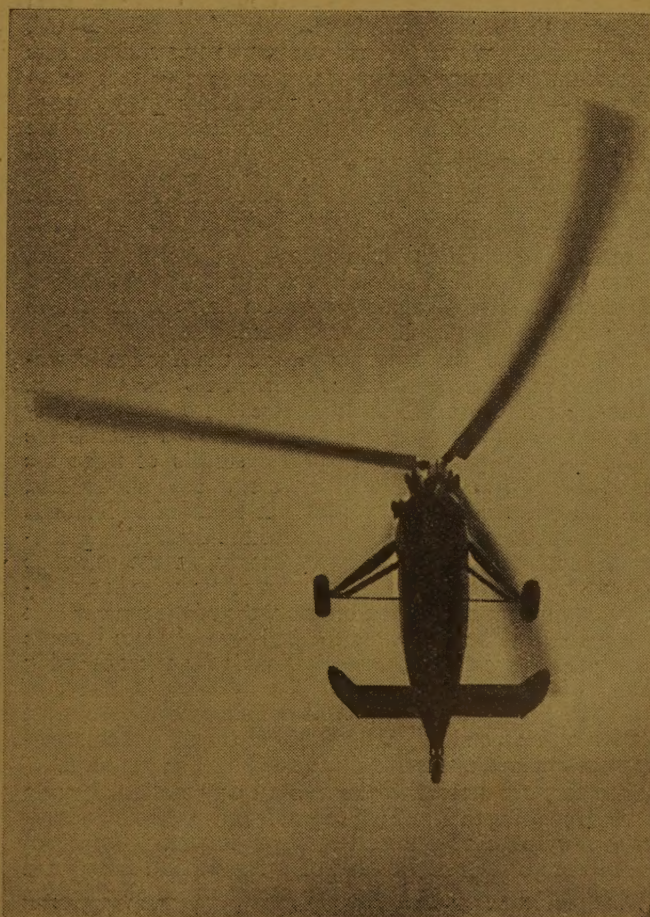
My general point is that much of this research would not, I feel pretty sure, be going on if it were not for the competition of road transport. As a result of this, the railways went



Modern forms of transport in rivalry—train, aeroplane and motor-boat



Seaplane landing in mid-Atlantic on a floating platform to re-fuel



Silhouette of an autogiro

through a bad period, from which they emerged with a determination to do something big to regain some of their lost ground. So we have intensive research, widespread electrification, longer week-ends and cheaper return tickets, and all sorts of facilities which the passengers of an earlier era did not dream of.

Some of these reactions of the railways to the roads, by the way, have had striking further effects. It happens that the Southern Railway has done more towards electrification near London than any other of the big companies. The result has been that there has been more building development on this side than on the east or north, for instance. And this has, of course, brought its own problem of road communication. Among the demands made on the road system by the growth of motor transport is the demand for new roads as outlets from cities—a demand which has given us roads like the Great North Road, the Kingston By-Pass, and so on. The growth of these new arterial roads itself made a demand upon the scientific spirit, but one which, alas, has not been satisfied.

The roads themselves were laid out scientifically enough. The obvious corollary to this planning of the line of the new road was the planning of the area on either side of the road. But what has actually happened? Instead of the road being kept to its real function as an outlet, new suburbs, almost all in ribbon development, have been allowed to parasitise the road and turn it into a supplier of local transport needs instead of an artery straight from the city's heart to the country. The only people who have profited are the owners of the land on either side. The dwellers in the new houses have a dangerous and noisy stream of traffic flowing past them; and the arterial roads are getting so congested that in some places they themselves might with advantage be by-passed! And this leaves out the blatant ugliness of the business. Contrast this with a road like the Northern Parkway out of New York, which has been properly designed so that it does remain arterial, and also remains beautiful, and the Englishman feels ashamed at the stupidity of what has happened in his own country.

This leads on to another problem—the need for a scientific organisation of transport systems, as well as the scientific improvement of the mechanical means of transport. As an example of what the scientific method, in the shape of planning, can do in this field, we need not go further than London, with its new gigantic Passenger Transport Board, unifying under a single planned control all the undertakings concerned with moving masses of people about—buses, tubes and trams—over the whole London area. And we may contrast this with the state of affairs in the Manchester area, where there are nine separately-administered undertakings all running their own transport services. That means nine central offices, nine reserves of trams and buses, nine emergency staffs, nine repair organisations, nine workshops, all in the one region. The unnecessary duplication is enormous. Here, however, as happened in London, the logic of the situation is forcing things to a conclusion, and a move is on foot to amalgamate all the nine in a single board.

I had a talk with the Chief Engineer of the London Transport Board at the head offices over St. James' Park Station, and he told me some of the scientific research work which they were carrying out. A great deal of it is directed towards the comfort of the passenger. Elaborate studies of noise are being made with a new instrument, the audiometer, which measures noise pretty nearly in terms of its loudness to the hearer, instead of, as with many sound-measuring instruments, in terms of the amount of energy, in the scientific sense, which goes to make it. Does most of the noise in a tube-train come from reverberation on the walls of the tunnel? Is it made mostly by the wheels or the body-work? Does it come through the windows, or the floor? What is the effect of lining tunnels with absorbent material like asbestos (it must, of course, be fireproof as well as sound-absorbent)? Accurate answers to these, and other, questions are being got by scientific measurement, and more silent trains will be the result.

Then they are measuring the amount of vibration. I saw a machine for doing this, and the record it had made of a journey over a few miles of the underground system. The record showed the position and extent of every vertical bump and every sideways sway, and also the rate at which acceleration and deceleration—getting to speed from stop and back again—was achieved. Another machine measured the actual tiny movements of a rail as a train goes over it. This, too, is leading

to various improvements in smooth running. Then there is work on ventilation, which has led, on the new lines, to ventilating shafts being put between stations instead of in the stations, and so on. Even the problem of getting people to and from the trains can be studied by the scientific method. When the new Piccadilly Station was projected, they had full-scale models of its different floors made in pasteboard; and in consequence were able to make numerous alterations that could not have been suggested from the mere study of plans and blueprints. So here, the research spirit has definitely saved the London public a certain amount of disagreeable jostling. But with all the improvements that have been made, there are other causes outside the scope of even the most powerful transport board, which have brought the traffic of our big cities into a not very happy state. The very advances of science which have made it theoretically possible to get quickly from place to place, have produced a congestion which is making that result more and more difficult of attainment.

Meanwhile, curious things are happening as the result of applied science, coupled with invention and human daring, invading the air. This country has seen a certain defined sequence in the development of communications: first riding and pack animals, then wheeled animal transport on roads, then steam and railways, then the motor invasion of the roads, then the invasion of the fields and rough places by caterpillar tractors and the invasion of the air by airships and aeroplanes. We have seen the better part of this sequence compressed into the space of a single generation. Today, however, in some parts of the globe development is going on, but in reversed sequence. A year or so ago I met a German journalist who had just come back from a visit to Tadzhikistan and other mountainous Asiatic regions of Soviet Russia. There, he told me, up till recently pack animals were practically the only means of transport. The first sign of progress in communications was the aeroplane; next came the tractors for the fields; only after that did roads begin to be made and motor traffic appear, while the horse-drawn wheeled vehicle showed up very little and last of all. The same sort of thing is occurring in many parts of Africa. The aeroplane need not bother much about marshes and jungle and steep hills; the roads and the railways come later. In Africa, too, it is a very moot point whether railways shall be built at all in certain districts, or whether good roads and good lorries and buses won't serve the needs of traffic better and more cheaply. Much of Africa remained undeveloped until a date sufficiently long after the invention of the internal combustion engine for this question to be put. Fifty years ago there was no such question—the railway was then the only possible solution. That is an interesting sidelight on the way scientific and technical progress links up with the accidents of history.

So far I have been talking about the applications of science to transport—all the devices which promote travel and getting about from place to place, and make for a more restless world. But while all this was happening, other scientific discoveries were being made, which, though they too were applied in the field of communications, on the whole worked in the opposite direction. I mean, of course, the discoveries which have made it possible for people to have the whole world brought before their eyes and ears at home instead of their having to go out into the world. Printing and the daily Press constitute one of the tendencies working in this direction; but perhaps even more important in the long run were two scientific discoveries of last century—the discovery of long ether waves and of the photo-electric properties of selenium.

Let us take these in order. Hertz' discovery of the long ether waves was the first to exert practical effect in this sphere. Thanks to scientific pioneers like Sir Oliver Lodge, and brilliant inventors like Marconi, Hertz' discovery gave birth to a wholly new method of communication—the wireless. Everyone knows the story of its development—from its first employment as an alternative to the cable system in sending Morse and similar messages; its widespread use to ensure the safety of ships; its technical improvement until it became capable of transmitting music and the human voice without undue distortion; then the astonishing growth of broadcasting. This, of course, has been followed up with enormous improvements in transmission and reception, and recently the introduction of short-wave systems has made it possible to transmit all round the world with the expenditure of very little power.

(Continued on page 760)

Vanishing England—IV

The Penn Country

By HOWARD MARSHALL

I WAS late for breakfast, and I hate being late, especially for breakfast. I had a fairly good excuse, though. I was on my way to breakfast in Beaconsfield, before beginning a tour of the Penn Country of Buckinghamshire, and I had to pass through Slough.

The country was golden—but perhaps I had better explain

trying to save—we have no excuse for sitting back in our chairs and feeling relieved that there is apparently no need to do anything. There is the most pressing need for active co-operation in Buckinghamshire.

I can explain this better, I daresay, by describing briefly the journey I made the other morning. It began, as I said, at

Beaconsfield, and we went out along the main Oxford road towards Gerrard's Cross. This is a beautiful road, and I was interested and glad to learn that it is now a parkway in embryo—that is to say, the land-owners on either side of the road have wisely agreed to preserve a fifty-foot stretch of land along the highway for over a mile, so that if building development takes place the margin of the road will remain green and pleasant, the houses will lie well back, trees will be spared, and there will be side roads running behind the green strips so that parking will not reduce the effective width of the main road. That was a good beginning, but after Gerrard's Cross we ran into a little trouble.

Chalfont St. Peter, for example, is a charming little village, but the approach from Gerrard's Cross is ruined by an untidy mess of modern houses and a garage with a red tin roof. And if you turn sharp left, out of the delightful main street, you suddenly come upon a suburban



An old Beaconsfield cottage converted into a modern shop

Notice the curved window and balanced doorways, the proportion of brickwork to windows, and the good lettering.

why I went to the Penn Country at all. Someone said to me the day before: 'What are you going there for? It's all part of Greater London. Why don't you go further afield into the real countryside?' It is just because the Penn Country is so close to London—about twenty-three miles away, to be exact—that I thought it would be interesting. Here in this corner of Buckinghamshire is a special problem—the problem of a piece of countryside threatened by the expansion of a great town and by local industrialisation. Here you can see the clutching hand of London at work. You can see the possibility of satellite towns for London workers—already places like Beaconsfield are virtually dormitories; and, on the other side of the picture, you can see a great and encouraging fight going on to preserve a very beautiful and historical corner of England.

There is no need for me to enlarge on the historical side of

it. There is history round every turn in the Penn Country. What is more, this part of Buckinghamshire has an individual beauty, a kindness of gentle valleys and wandering lanes and beech-woods among the hills. It is a county worth fighting for and there is great activity there; but again I must insist that because the local branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England is extremely alert and energetic—because a number of people realise the value of the countryside they are



On the other side of the road

Notice the ugly window inserted in a fine old building, lack of balance, and bad lettering. The office over the archway is that of a builder who has upheld the tradition of the old town.

By courtesy of Mrs. Langley Taylor

stretch of pavement, with ugly shop fronts and all the usual horrors. If that sort of vandalism shakes us out of our complacency, I suppose we can only console ourselves by saying that it serves some purpose, at any rate. And now for Welders Lane. I expect many of you have heard of Welders Lane—it winds down to the world-famous Quakers' Meeting House at Jordans, and there has been a great deal of controversy about the proposal to turn it

into a motor road. Well, the first thing we saw there was a new house being built among the trees—quite a pleasant house, incidentally—but the fact is that the land up at the top there has been sold and Welders Lane is to be developed. That means road widening, I am afraid, for it is a very narrow lane, and the traffic is bound to increase. It is a great pity—but there it is: we may regret the fact that even now Welders Lane should be widened, but the truth is that with houses behind the hedgerows, the lane would lose its character anyway, and we have to face up to it. The important thing is that the widening process should not be carried on past the historic little Meeting House which lies at the bottom of the lane—by the way, I was horrified to see a comparatively new red-roofed hostel just down the slope before you come to the Meeting House—a singularly ill-advised piece of building, it seemed to me. Fortunately, though after a great deal of argument, it has been decided to run the road left-handed, so to speak, behind a belt of trees, screened from the Meeting House, which is left in a quiet corner by itself, with only the lane running down to it. This is a compromise, I know, but in the circumstances it appears to be the only sensible one if the widening of the road is inevitable.

Let us hope, then, that the Meeting House is relatively safe: though I must admit that I felt, as we left for Seer Green, that it was uncomfortably near the firing line. And Seer Green—there's a pleasant village for you, approached from Jordans—tiny cottages, many of them reconditioned, lying back behind their gardens. And then, round the corner, just beyond one of the loveliest cherry orchards in Buckinghamshire, the horrors begin—new, shapeless, cardboard-box-like houses, stuck down anyhow and anywhere; wretched villas covered with pebble-dash, that cheap and nasty yellow rash—a conglomeration of monstrosities, grouped indiscriminately round this lovely little village.

I know it is only one more example of the sort of thing that is going on everywhere, but it may interest you to know how they are trying to check it in the Penn Country. They have invited the co-operation of architects, who have supplied a number of plans for houses costing not more than £350. These plans are available to anyone who wishes to build a house, at the cost of a copy of the plan, which works out at a guinea—so that for a guinea, a builder may put up architecturally designed houses from plans passed by three assessors—two architects and a builder. If this service is widely used, it is obviously an excellent way of ensuring that if cheap houses are put up in the countryside they shall at least be architecturally sound and pleasing and appropriate. I saw a number of the plans now available and they appear to be excellent in every way.

Now I must hurry on, through a strip of ugliness known as Three Households, a string of most unlovely villas, to Chalfont St. Giles—where you may see Milton's cottage. Unhappily you may also see a red rash of new houses on the hillside beyond, and a hideous garage on a road corner up the hill leading out of the village. Chalfont St. Giles, like Chalfont St. Peter, is hemmed in with paltry building.

But what about Amersham, that very beautiful old town? Amersham is wretchedly despoiled: there is no milder way of putting it. The first thing you see coming from Chalfont St. Giles is a row of villas on the hill, then the gasometer, then a white water tower, which I believe is also what they call a solarium, right on the crest of the hill which rises beyond the town. This water-tower belongs to an extremely modern house: one of those angular, flat-roofed, many windowed, steel and concrete white affairs which no doubt are very healthy and convenient for those who live in them. Now I am all for health and convenience, but I cannot believe that they need be acquired quite so stridently. That house would be all very well appropriately situated somewhere with other modern houses, but I can't see that it is appropriately situated near a beechwood on the summit of a hill, above a seventeenth-century town. It forces itself upon the attention of the passer-by, and that any house should do that strikes me as an example of bad manners in architecture.

As it happens, this house is not the only culprit, for dotted around on the hillside are little villas, and at the top of the

hill is a building estate of singular ugliness—houses, as my companion remarked, like pieces of cheese stuck up on end. Well, that's a distressing sight, that hillside, and the entrance to Amersham is just as bad—the green tin roofs of a petrol station and a sausage factory, with the brand of sausage writ large upon the tin, a tin omnibus station and petrol pumps—a shabby approach indeed. We don't deserve to have enchanting towns like Amersham if we allow them to be so shamefully treated.

It was a relief after that to go through the lovely Misbourne Valley, and through the delightful village of Little Missenden: it was also a relief to leave behind the railway station approach at Great Missenden—why need railway stations make so much ugliness?—and the senseless, random ribbon development which winds round with the road, and is known as Prestwood.

And so, past a bungalow town in Disraeli's valley of Hughenden, to High Wycombe. High Wycombe is appalling. You approach it on the Aylesbury Road through rows of villas. You reach the town and are greeted with a street which is rather like Brixton without the trams. The shop fronts in High Wycombe compete against one another with a truly metropolitan stridency. And High Wycombe was once a quiet old market town. You can still see that it was a pleasant place. And there used to be a garden in the middle of it. I have seen photographs of old gentlemen in top-hats attending the ceremony when Frogmore Gardens were opened to the public. That was not so very long ago; but Frogmore Gardens are now replaced by a flat expanse of paving stone round which the traffic rumbles. I wish I knew why the public have had their gardens taken away from them. And have you ever driven along the road to Oxford between High Wycombe and West Wycombe? It's a disgrace—a dreary hodge-podge of cheap building spreading over the valley and up the hillside on the right of the road—incredibly and stupidly ugly. That kind of thing makes you feel helpless: though West Wycombe itself, a seventeenth century village, preserved and reconditioned by the Royal Society of Arts, is reassuring—a sign of the times, let us hope: a sign at least that in some quarters, efforts are being made to hold on to what is left of England.

There I turned round and made my way back to Slough through Fulmer, and the approach to Slough that way is not exactly pretty. Still, Slough has a problem; it is an industrial area and somehow the local authorities will have to try to plan the domestic side of the factories in the trading centre compactly, without unduly interfering with the surrounding countryside.

It is, as I have said before, useless to complain about what has already been done. It is more to the point to discover, as I did, that the Slough planning authorities are keenly aware of their problems, and anxious to make the best use of their powers.

And this is also important—I have tried to tell you of some of the damage which has been done in Buckinghamshire, simply as a warning of what we have to fight against. The Penn Country is still very beautiful, though, and tremendously worth fighting for. And the way to fight for it is to join the local branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, who need your co-operation, and above all need information of fresh threats to the countryside so that they can take action in good time.

Dr. Otto Neurath, Director of the Vienna Social and Economic Museum, is at present in this country visiting a number of educational and other institutions to give addresses upon the Vienna Pictorial Methods of Conveying Statistical and Social Information. On Thursday, November 16, he speaks at the Friends' Meeting House, Euston Road, at 6.15 p.m., on 'The Visual Method in Peace Propaganda', under the auspices of the National Peace Council, and on Saturday, November 18, at 11 a.m., at the College of Preceptors, Bloomsbury Square, on 'The Use of the Vienna Pictorial Method in the School'. Thereafter he is making a short tour of provincial centres, including Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester and Cambridge. Anyone wishing to interview Dr. Neurath should get into touch with Miss Brenda Voysey, c/o World Association for Adult Education, 16 Russell Square, W.C. 1.

The Countryman's Chamber of Horrors—I



The solitary beauty of Bowerdean Farm—



—swallowed up by the octopus of brick and mortar, in the Chilterns, near High Wycombe

Photographs: Edward Sweetland



The Listener

All communications should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.I. The articles in THE LISTENER being mainly reprints of broadcast talks, original contributions are not invited. Articles in THE LISTENER do not necessarily represent the views of the B.B.C. Yearly Subscription rates (including postage): Home and Canada, 17s. 4d.; Foreign, 19s. 6d. Shorter periods, pro rata.

Making a University

HOW is a University made? We doubt whether there are many people, either among those who have attended a University or among those who have not, who could explain how an institution of this sort, which represents the highest and most varied form of educational activity, takes root and grows up. The question does not arise concerning our older Universities, whose origin goes back to the mists of the middle ages. But it applies to those younger Universities whose appearance during the past forty or fifty years in the provinces has contributed so much to the progress of higher education in England. That there is romance behind the story of the upspringing of these modern provincial Universities is shown by the account which Dr. W. M. Childs has just published of his own lifework in building up the University of Reading, whose first Vice-Chancellor he was from 1926 to 1929*. The modesty of Dr. Childs' narrative seems to make light of an achievement which ranks at least equal in importance with the building up of a great business, or an extension of the arm of the State into some new sphere of activity.

Special interest attaches to the history of Reading University, firstly because it sprang up right under the noses, as it were, of two older, richer and far more powerful foundations at Oxford and London; and secondly because it was distinguished from most provincial Universities of the Midlands and North by finding a home in a non-industrial southern town, and in adopting from its early days the system of collegiate residence for students. Most of the northern Universities took their origin in the needs of industry, and grew up first as technical colleges. But the University of Reading had its roots in other soil. It was a child of two parents, one the University Extension Movement inspired from Oxford and flavoured with the ideals of the Workers' Educational Association, the other the Reading Agricultural College which from the 'nineties onwards made for itself a special name in dairy research and training. It was in 1903 that, after ten years' apprenticeship in the teaching and administrative work of the infant College, Dr. Childs was appointed its Principal, and the next twenty years saw him undertake the great adventure of its transformation into a full-fledged University.

How do these things come about? Whence is money attracted to provide the buildings and endowments

necessary to a University? The answer is to be found in Dr. Childs' book. The Principal who is to turn his College into a University must be the sort of man, not only who can turn an annual deficit into an annual surplus, not only who possesses the necessary tact to draw grants and concessions from municipal authorities and the State, but who also knows intuitively when and how to seek the help of those wealthy and public-spirited benefactors who alone can provide the capital sums required to put up worthy buildings. More than this, he must be the sort of man who can draw first-class teaching talent from other Universities and students from different parts of the country. Two of the greatest achievements of Dr. Childs were his securing of a hall of residence for students through the bounty of Lady Wantage, and later his success in interesting George William Palmer, the biscuit magnate, in the financial side of the College's struggle to gain University status.

By 1913 Reading College possessed no less than five halls, which gave to its students a vigorous communal life not enjoyed at many other colleges. Then after the War came the two attempts, separated by five years, to gain a Charter for the University. Dr. Childs sought to raise Reading from the anomalous position of a University College, which, as he points out, 'means an institution which endeavours to do the work of a University without the corollary and advantage of University independence'. There were big neighbours only too ready to swallow up the ambitious aspirant, so that the alternative to independence was amalgamation or absorption. Had the College been situated in a thickly-populated industrial centre, its path to promotion would have been easier. As it was, the triumph in 1925 was as much the work of one man, and as little the work of circumstances, as such an achievement ever can be. In building up a name for itself for agricultural research and training, Reading College might have been thought during the pre-War years of agricultural decadence to have been 'backing the wrong horse'. But time has turned full circle, and Reading will gain a new importance as the future of farming in this country grows brighter. On the other hand, Reading's traditional connection with adult education has fostered in her a tradition of humane, non-vocational studies which gives her the true spirit of a University. It is not easy to explain in words how a tradition of culture grows up, but Dr. Childs' book comes near to revealing the secret.

Week by Week

UNDER the will of Miss Elsie Ballot of Durban, who died in 1930, Cambridge is to have a foundation on the lines of the Oxford Rhodes Trust. The scholarships will be confined to South Africans of European descent between the ages of 19 and 25, valued at £400 per annum, and tenable for three years. If the number of scholarships available each year is to be fixed—as it has already been for 1934—at two, there will thus be a maximum of six South African scholars in residence at one time. This is, of course, far below the number of Rhodes Scholars at Oxford, who are furthermore drawn from America and Germany as well as from the Empire. Nevertheless, a start has been made to adjust a situation which has long been a matter of controversy, particularly as it affects almost all the annual sporting contests. Rhodes Scholars are usually, by the very nature of the qualifications demanded of them, good athletes, and being older and more experienced than our own public-school athletes have always played an important part in University sport. Whether this is to the advantage or detriment of Oxford is hotly disputed. When Oxford is in the ascendancy the Rhodes Scholars are usually given the credit for it (an American Rhodes Scholar stroked the only winning Oxford crew since the War), but when she experiences a sporting depression they are blamed for frightening away the most promising home material. Outside sporting circles, of

* *Making a University*, by Dr. W. M. Childs. Dcnt, 6s.

course, there has never been any doubt of the advantage that Oxford derives from her Rhodes Scholars. Though not often intellectual leaders, they add a mature and serious element to undergraduate life. It is to be hoped therefore that the lead given by Miss Ballot will be followed by others and that Cambridge will eventually be provided with a body of young men, of the type defined by Cecil Rhodes, to mingle to their mutual advantage with her home-grown products.

* * *

On October 20, the day before the centenary of Nobel's birth, the German periodical *Forschungen und Fortschritte* published a very interesting table showing the distribution of the Nobel prizes among the nations from 1901-1932. The table is drawn up on the awards of four of the prizes—those for physics, chemistry, medicine or physiology, and literature. On this basis Germany is easily top, with a total of 36 prizes as against Great Britain's 20 (or, taking the Empire as one unit, 24; 10 of whom are Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge), France's 20, America's 9 and Sweden's 8. The Netherlands and Denmark score 6 each; Italy 4; Switzerland, Austria, Spain and Norway 3; Belgium, Canada, Poland and India 2; and Russia and Tunis 1. (In the 1933 prize-list, just announced, Germany is again represented: but by a man—Professor Schrödinger, now of Oxford, who shares the Physics prize with Professor P. A. M. Dirac of Cambridge—who has been forced by political events to leave his own country.) But the table takes no account of the fifth prize that, by the terms of Nobel's will, goes to 'the person who shall have most or best promoted the fraternity of nations and the abolition or diminution of standing armies and the formation and increase of peace congresses'. The addition of the Peace prize figures would have given America (which has won 7), Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries rather higher total percentages. Nor would it have very much reduced Germany's, for Germany has 4 to her credit. In 1905 there was the Baroness von Suttner, who got it on the strength of her book published in 1898, *Nieder mit den Waffen*; in 1911, A. H. Fried, co-editor of the journal *Die Friedenswarte*, which deals with peace chiefly from the standpoint of international law; in 1927, Ludwig Quidde, historian and founder of the German League of Nations Society; and, of course, in 1926, Stresemann. But these are names not honoured in official Germany today, which counts physicists and physiologists (if Aryan) as assets, but pacifists, whatever their grandmothers, as entries on the debit side of the national account.

* * *

On another page of this issue a correspondent takes Mr. Arthur Bryant to task for one-sidedness in dealing with 'The Parson' in his talk last week. Mr. Bryant was, of course, in this series concerned not with assessing the parson's spiritual worth but with presenting him as a typical English character. There is no doubt that such parsons of English fiction as Fielding's Adams, Trollope's Mark Robarts, Meredith's Dr. Middleton, approximate very nearly to Mr. Bryant's account of the hearty, jolly, sensual parson. But it is as certainly true that, although it has seldom entered fiction, there is another and totally different picture of a parson: a picture in which there is more prayer and study than eating and merry-making. For this picture we can go to such books as Izaak Walton's *Lives*, where Donne is shown wrestling in prayer and consulting the Early Fathers, Hooker giving a 'holy valediction to all the pleasures and allurements of earth', and Nicholas Farrer finding the vanities of the world a 'nothing between two dishes' and spending his life in mortifications and in devotion; to Fuller's *Holy State* where the faithful minister 'carefully catechiseth his people', 'chiefly reproves the reigning sins of the time and place he lives in', and 'humours not his people in his doctrine, to get their love'; to the devotional poetry of Donne, Herbert and Vaughan. Surely men like these are also truly characteristic of the Church of England? And there is this further point to be made; that, each time the Church of England has fallen into the doldrums it has been not for lack of Parson Adames but for lack of Hookers and Herberts. It was because there was too much drinking and too little praying in the Anglican Church of the eighteenth century that John Wesley was driven to leave it and find spiritual comfort outside the Establishment. It was not from hearty parsons that at the end of the century the Establishment itself received spiritual regeneration, but

from the leavening of the evangelical movement. (Can we imagine Mr. Bryant's parson among the Clapham Sect working to destroy the slave trade?) It was in part because so many of the Anglican clergy of the early nineteenth century were slothful and worldly that the Oxford Movement came into being. Indeed, the best spokesman of the view complementary to Mr. Bryant's is Newman himself, who writes thus of the National Church of England: 'In all parts of the world it is the religion of gentlemen, of scholars, of men of substance, and men of no personal faith at all'. This was not a fulmination hurled from the Church of Rome, but written in 1833, in a lecture addressed to the Anglican Party, when Newman was still a parson within the Anglican Communion.

* * *

The current number of *The Chamber of Commerce Journal* contains statistics of great interest relating to the trading history of London. Their principal concern is to record the number of business houses which have been operating continuously for more than one hundred years, and of these research has brought to light no fewer than 850. Furthermore 40 of them are more than 200, 7 more than 300, and 3 more than 400 years old. The credit for the longest history belongs to a hotel founded in the fourteenth century, but it is closely followed by the Oxford University Press, founded in 1468, and a brewery founded in 1492. An analysis of the various business interests represented reveals some further interesting facts: 69 of the houses are devoted to textiles, 47 to wines and spirits, 44 to printing and stationery, 40 to publishing, 34 to chemicals and drugs, 31 to jewellery and plate, 27 to banking and bill-broking. In addition it is surprising to learn that such modern enterprises as insurance companies and advertising agencies have 18 houses and 9 houses respectively, more than a century old. Yet with all this antiquity and tradition to maintain, it is from these very houses that many of the foremost industrial inventions have come. For example, 'the maker of castings for Stephenson's No. 1 locomotive is to be found here; also the makers of springs for Stephenson's *Rocket*, and for the first aeroplane to fly in this country'. Indeed one of the most striking characteristics of these venerable business houses is the progressive and enterprising spirit that has enabled them to adapt themselves through periods of rapid industrial change. One concern, established on Old London Bridge, now specialises in central heating and ventilation, and there are several records of original dealers in horses whose business is now with motor-cars.

* * *

Our Scottish correspondent writes: It may seem a small thing that the Chief Scout has forbidden the wearing by Rover Scouts in Scotland of the traditional flat bonnet with the kilt—or that he should think it necessary to insist on the use of the conventional Scout hat—but the fact is that his order to that effect looks like causing a small revolution among us. When the original order was issued more than a year ago it was generally ignored, the Glasgow Rovers, appearing on church parade a few Sundays later with the jaunty 'Balmoral' on their brows. Now the ruling has been reiterated by Lord Glentanar, Scottish Headquarters Commissioner, and the immediate effect of this has been the voluntary disbandment of the 2nd Highland Rovers, who have their headquarters at Elgin, with threats of similar action in larger centres and the possibility of an opposition movement being formed outside Lord Baden-Powell's jurisdiction. The episode has inevitably provoked a lot of wild talk. The ban is ascribed to the 'jealousy' of English Rovers at international gatherings, at which the Scots in kilts and bonnets are reputed to have collared most of the lime-light; it is even being said that the defiant attitude of the Scottish Rovers is of deep political significance. The best way to take it is that the Chief Scout, imperfectly advised, has innocently offended a sense in the young Scot of today that is essentially æsthetic, as the conjunction between the kilt and the flat bonnet undoubtedly is. This sense of historical propriety has developed among us to a remarkable extent during the last ten years or so, and it has really very little to do with the purely political movement; but it is quite certain that such an action as that of the Chief Scout tends to give the cultural side of Nationalism a political significance. That Lord Baden-Powell's position in the matter is weak is manifest in his modification of the original order. At first the ban was complete; now it has been whittled down to cover only the wearing of the Balmoral at anything but rallies within Scotland.



The headquarters of Italy's great air force—the Ministry of Aeronautics, inaugurated in 1931

E.N.A.

Foreign Affairs

The Italian Attitude Towards Disarmament

By VERNON BARTLETT

Broadcast from Rome on November 4

THE amazing war between Italians and Austrians up above the snow line in the Alps and the Dolomites came to an end a week before the armistice with Germany was signed, and so Armistice Day is commemorated in Italy on November 4. Since early this morning aeroplanes have been carrying out flights in formation overhead and during the morning guns were firing with a persistency that was a little worrying for those who knew anything of actual warfare. I have long held the theory that Rome, in proportion to the amount of its traffic, is the noisiest capital I have ever visited except Ankara, and all the military bands today confirmed me in this theory. But some of these bands played the song of the Piave, one of the tunes which helped to bring the Italians to victory fifteen years ago, and when I hear that particular tune I feel so enthusiastic that I lose all my desire for a successful disarmament conference. It turns me into a militarist. If the motor-cars would hoot that tune when they approached street corners I should love Rome even more than I do.

Today has been an odd day for anybody who lived in Rome in 1921 and 1922. There have been plenty of officers walking around in the most brilliant of uniforms, but much the most impressive sight was that of the columns of ordinary middle-class people marching down the Corso wearing the black shirts and the grey breeches which they wore before Mussolini came into power. Watching these men, who then were young and now are reaching middle-age, I found myself contrasting the position Italy held in 1921 with the position she holds today, eleven years after the march on Rome. In those days nobody would worry at all about the attitude of Italy in any grave question of international politics; a few days ago quite an important Frenchman, talking of disarmament, said 'Everything depends upon Italy'. And, watching Signor Mussolini coming down the glaring white marble steps from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier this morning I wondered if he thought about the difference between then and now. Probably not, because he has been present at each anniversary of the Italian armistice, while to me it comes as something of a shock to discover how definitely Italy has become one of the Great Powers. If Signor Mussolini were to throw his influence on to the side of the Germans there would be a revival of the system of rivalries we used to call the balance

of power; if he continues his present attempt to build a bridge between France and Germany, he may be judged by later generations as the most valuable peacemaker in Europe.

I have forgotten how long ago it is since he said that the wings of Italy's aeroplanes must be numerous enough to cast a shadow over the sun—or something of that sort. I was trying to remember this morning as I watched these great bombing machines casting their shadows over the magnificent, the pathetic marble columns which mark the ruins of the temples of ancient Rome, and over the irregular flagstones of the street along which came victorious generals who had been accorded a Roman triumph. But there is not much doubt now that Signor Mussolini wants peace. Even before Fascism became a real party and an influence in politics, he was demanding a revision of the peace treaties, but there can be no question that he wants a peaceful revision. Why, within a few days he is to hold a meeting which is to discuss the practical introduction of the corporative system instead of the democracy we know in our own country. From my hotel I can look out on to a magnificent new building, the Ministero delle Corporazioni, where most of the windows are always in darkness. That, one supposes, is going to change. Now, at last, we are reaching the stage when the idea of government based upon the co-operation, instead of the competition, between employers and employees is to be put to the practical test, and every country which has made a mess of democracy will follow this experiment with the closest attention. Signor Mussolini, as I have suggested before now, has built up something so big that he cannot risk a war which would destroy it all.

That is one of the reasons why the Italian attitude towards disarmament is interesting and important. In France, as I pointed out when I broadcast from Paris, there is the desire to go straight ahead and to draw up a convention which will be presented to Germany with a take-it-or-leave-it sort of air. Life would be pleasant enough if Germany took it; it would only be difficult if Germany left it. Here the feeling is just the other way round. Every Italian with whom I have discussed the matter has argued that it would be rather worse than useless to draw up a convention without German collaboration. Even if, in her dislike of isolation, Germany should accept such a convention, she would have that feeling that it

was, as the Germans call the Versailles Treaty itself, a *Diktat*—something which was signed under pressure and which therefore involved no moral obligation.

There is no doubt that Germany's sudden decision to leave the League of Nations annoyed the Italians very considerably, and in many other ways there is a feeling that National Socialism is not a very flattering imitation of Fascism. But, the argument goes, there can be no peace in Europe until Germany is put on a footing of complete equality with the other Powers. Even if this involved some slight German rearmament, because other countries were slow to disarm, the concession—so the Italian argument runs—would be easily outweighed by the spontaneous German acceptance of as complete a system of armament control as human imagination could devise. All such questions as the granting to Germany the right to build certain types of guns and so on which are now forbidden to her, however, are put into the melting pot again by Germany's departure from the League.

The important thing, the Italians argue, is not to worry about who is to blame for past failures, but to see how success can be achieved in the future. In the first place, nothing can be done until the German people have approved Herr Hitler's

policy at the election. Secondly, time is needed in which opinion on either side can calm down. Thirdly, discussions in the Disarmament Conference before the Great Powers were agreed would be worse than useless. Therefore, say the Italians, the easiest way of tying up the threads again would be to hold a meeting of the Four Power Pact, which was designed to deal with difficulties just such as this. The Locarno Conference pledged British and Italian intervention between France and Germany in the event of fighting; the Four Power Pact should lead them to intervene between France and Germany in the event of difficulties such as have now arisen. The two countries which are more or less neutral—Great Britain and Italy—should be able to persuade France and Germany to agree. And there should be nothing to prevent the United States from joining in the attempt to build this bridge between Paris and Berlin. And once the girders, or whatever you call the skeleton of a bridge, had been put in place, then the whole matter would come back to the League to be settled in detail. So that there ought to be a postponement of the Disarmament Conference, but in *no* case a postponement for an indefinite period. And that, in brief, is the way in which the Italians look at this problem of disarmament.

The End of Prohibition

By SIR WILMOT LEWIS

Broadcast from Washington on November 8

THE Eighteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, better known as the Prohibition Act, has gone. It had a life of little less than fifteen years, and it took some nine months only to kill it. Two-thirds, or thirty-six of the forty-eight States, must agree before any change can be made in the Constitution, and as this number has already voted for repeal, when the constitutional convention in those States have duly met and have solemnly reported to the Central Government on December 5, there will be an official proclamation of what is already a fact.

It is a fair guess that out of 123 million Americans now alive, at least 70 millions will enthusiastically agree with the historian Buckle that the greatest pages in history of legislation are those which record the repeal of previous legislation. Please don't imagine that when the proclamation of December 5 is made that liquor will flow freely within the borders of the United States. It is true that the Volstead Act, which was the statute giving effect to the Eighteenth Amendment, will cease to have validity in every one of the States, but only eighteen of those forty-eight will be left without some prohibitory measure of their own; and as for the capital City of Washington, from which I speak, and the territories of Alaska, Hawaii, the Virgin Islands and the Panama Canal Zone, they will have to bear with the Volstead Act until Congress abrogates it.

Of the thirty States that have prohibitory laws of their own, some forbid the consumption of anything more strongly fortifying than the 3.2 near beer which is already on tap, but in others the situation is so involved as to be the despair of lawyers—who are not easily given to despair.

What is to become of it all it would be impossible to predict. President Roosevelt will summon to the White House a group of officials in order to devise a liquor control policy for the Central Government, and only when this has been contrived and enacted as a statute by Congress will that aspect of the matter be clear. The Central or Federal Government has the obligation to protect States which desire to remain dry against the shipment of liquor entering from wet States; it has the obligation to control the method of shipment of liquor passing from one wet State to another wet State through the territory of a dry State: and it can do this, under the powers vested in it, by the sudden embargo on all commerce between the States. To say that it can do this is not to say that it is easy to do. It will take as long to protect the new system as it has taken to destroy the old: and in the meanwhile there are grave doubts as to the effect on that cause in which all Americans, whether wet or dry, are interested—the cause of temperance. While confusion reigns, temperance must suffer. It is not fair to say that the new system should have been made ready long since, for it is more than likely that any attempt in the last few months to submit a new system to public discussion would have aroused very much bitterness and contention so as to endanger the repeal of prohibition.

When the Central Government has acted there will remain the question of individual States: as I have said, eighteen of them will be left without control laws and must have them; the remaining thirty may decide to stiffen or liberalise the domestic laws they have, and all forty-eight States must in a thousand ways be affected by the nature of the legislation Congress will pass.

Then there is the question of the sums which the Federal

Government are likely to attempt to secure by imposing taxes on liquor. If the taxes are too high, the cost of liquor will be so high as to encourage bootlegging to continue its activities: if they are too low, the estimated revenue that is expected will be difficult to obtain. There will always be bootleggers, of course: the first was born when the first excise tax on liquor was passed in this country, and the last of them will be living in a world much newer than anything that has yet been promised by aspiring politicians.

Then there is the question of foreign importation, and the customs duty to be levied. The American liquor interests have been making ready for December 5 for many months, and making ready also for what is called a drive upon Congress to secure a complete embargo on foreign entries. They are reported to have 75 million gallons of domestic spirits on hand to be erected as a sort of wall to keep out the millions of gallons being held in Canada and Europe for shipment, and they are appealing to the spirit of nationalism by assurances that they will employ none but American labour and use nothing but American corn in the process of manufacture.

For the moment the man in the street cares for none of these things. When Prohibition came in, he was, for the most part, willing to admit that in theory it was a good thing, but when it became obviously unworkable in practice he first grew cynical and then disgusted. For a time, during the time of public cynicism, his household deity was Sairey Gamp, who, you will remember, said to Mr. Pecksniff: 'All I ask is that you leave the bottle on the chimney-piece so I can put my lips to it when so disposed'. There was Prohibition, but the bottle was on the chimney-piece, and there, in practice, it will probably remain in those States which still desire Prohibition. But the bootleggers, the organised gangster, the speak-easy, the 'blind pigs' and all the paraphernalia of illegality were at last too much for a cynical electorate, and cynicism turned to disgust. It was then that the need was found to end an experiment which was, as Mr. Hoover truly said, 'noble in purpose'.

A Young German who visited the United States some years ago was asked what he thought of Prohibition. 'If you don't mind my saying so', he said, 'it seems to me that drinking in America is no longer a pleasure—it's a duty'. Perhaps the future will restore the pleasure of drinking by making a duty of temperance, for that is the desire of the Government and the desire of the people. But the Eighteenth Amendment has thrown its evil roots, roots which are deep and thrive upon the very springs of political life, and it will be hard indeed to dig them up. The next year, or two years, or three years, will be a time of experiment, or what President Roosevelt called in another connection, trial and error, out of which may come laws fitted to the hopes and proclivities of the various regions of a very large and diverse country. There are signs already of agreement upon the need of distinct regulation between beer and wine on the one hand, and distilled liquor on the other, and upon the futility of assuming that taxes on legalised drinking can balance all the budgets, Federal and State. If good sense in the individual States of the Union and in a sufficient majority of the people is not forthcoming, it is not difficult to predict what will arise later—a public monopoly of the liquor traffic in order to destroy the methods of private profit.

Art

Alvar Aalto: A Psychological Architect

By P. MORTON SHAND

An exhibition of the standardised plywood furniture designed by Alvar Aalto has just been opened at 181 Piccadilly, through the enterprise of Messrs. Fortnum and Mason and 'The Architectural Review'

IN spite of the tremendous enthusiasm which Alvar Aalto's work arouses among the younger school of designers, it has not yet been generally realised in England that the outstanding architect of the present generation on the Continent is a Finn. Nor is this altogether surprising since the earliest of Aalto's important buildings was only finished in 1930—the year of that epoch-making Stockholm Exhibition. Now in a sense Aalto's work can be considered as the first North-European (we must not say Scandinavian) embodiment of the impersonal spirit of 'Asplund's Exhibition' outside Sweden. And paradoxical as it may sound it is a very personal embodiment. Aalto has been rather misleadingly called 'the most internationally-minded of Finnish architects'. But if he owes something to Corbusier, and more to Gropius, he owes more to Asplund than either; and most of all to himself. Also his genially realistic and ironic temperament makes him inclined to be as impatient of Teutonic mentality in general, and terms like '*Sachlichkeit*' in particular, as of Franco-Swiss rhetoric of the '*Une Maison—un Palais*' order.

The artistic public whose natural spokesmen are academic architects and traditional craftsmen of a literary bent failed to realise that in the post-War world a renaissance of design based on a restatement of the old historic forms, such as was heralded at the Gothenburg Exhibition of 1923, could only be the briefest of swan-songs. (Oddly enough it was as an assistant in the drawing-office in which the structural plans for that ex-

work forged no link for future development. This is the reason why the influence of the men trained by those truly creative pioneers, Auguste Perret and Peter Behrens—Corbusier and Gropius, and to a minor extent Lurçat and Mendelsohn—has been increasingly in evidence in Baltic countries



Top floor solarium balcony (one of those for less infectious cases) at the Paimio Sanatorium. Every patient is given a separate flowerbox and encouraged to grow his own plants. The balconies are of concrete cantilevered out from the wall and protected from the wind by glass screens, that also constitute the group division among the patients.

during the last decade. After 1930 Swedish architecture dropped out as completely as if it had been implicated in the Kreuger crash. Sven Markelius, its most prominent figure today, being a so-called 'functionalist', is an unknown name to many English architects who are still assimilating the famous decorative charm Sweden suddenly revealed in 1923 and resolutely forswore seven years later. From then up to 1932 Germany virtually monopolised the stage. Now, as the result of a political reaction, and for the sake of some historically '*urdeutsch*' mannerism still in embryo, Germany has denounced the magnificent architectural achievements of what, till yesterday, was her 'internationally inspired' present as Sweden had renounced the stylistic triumphs of her national tradition to embrace the Puritan austerity of an international structural creed. The evolution apparently checked by this brusque transition in Sweden has been vigorously resumed, and now centres, in her former province Finland: an intensely progressive nation which owes much to Swedish blood and culture.

Alvar Aalto was born in 1898 in the north of Finland, of mixed

Swedish-Finnish stock; his father being an ordnance survey engineer in the then Russian service. In 1922, just after he had taken his diploma in engineering and architecture at the Helsingfors Technical High School, he was appointed



One of the rows of dwellings for the non-nursing staff at Paimio, seen from the back

hibition were being prepared in 1920 that Aalto had his first practical experience). For these critics 'modern' Swedish architecture began with Östberg and ended with Tengbom: gifted architects who had no pupils of note because their



General view of the Paimio Sanatorium, showing the power-house and its chimney in the background; the nurses' wing in the middle; and the tiers of small solariums jutting out behind the immense blank wall of the patients' wing on the extreme left

Architect: Alvar Aalto

exhibition architect for the Finnish Industries Fair at Tammerfors. The next year he set up on his own account in Jyväskylä, a little town of barely 6,000 inhabitants, where his first job was a wooden workmen's club-house. As a result of winning a competition for the municipal theatre at Åbo, the old capital, he moved there in 1927. Here he built his first 'rationalised' block of flats; and was commissioned to design the offices of the 'Turun Sanomat', a leading Finnish daily

paper. The linotype room of this building quickly brought him international celebrity. In it he used what reinforced-concrete engineers call 'mushroom-slab construction', with which he achieved a peristyled effect that not even its leading exponent, the Swiss engineer Robert Maillart, has surpassed. The roof of this lofty hall is supported on dropped panels from which the peg-top columns are battened sharply outwards to their gracefully attenuated bases. High-glaze cellulose enamels produce a pillared vista stretching into a mirrored infinity in which walls, ceiling and floor disappear, leaving the rotary printing machines like a row of mechanistic altars, apparently poised in space.

In 1928 Aalto won the competition for the Paimio Consumptive Sanatorium. This building, which is only just finished, was the first to show how far he had left the bare bones of doctrinaire functionalism behind him in his quest of a rational synthesis of design. Paimio is a self-contained community of

290 patients housed in standardised two-bed wards, which cost just over £105,000 fully equipped. It is certainly the most revolutionary sanatorium in the world, but in something more than a merely structural sense. For the first time an architect has been found who insisted on pushing psychological desiderata far in advance of any existing medical demands.

In all tubercular sanatoriums it should be a basic principle to keep new arrivals and old inmates, incipient and serious

cases, segregated from each other. That separation at once postulates the whole delicate and complicated problem of the relation between the individual patient and the community of invalids of which he forms a part. For Aalto the architect's first duty is to anticipate the doctor in safeguarding the individual's 'psyche'. He therefore provided two different sorts of open-air lying-halls: a large roof-garden for fresh and less infectious cases; and a series of smaller solariums, communicating directly with the ward corridors, for the weaker and more contagious.



Doctors' Common Room at the Paimio Sanatorium

The board is covered with compressed cork slabs. The stylised floor-plans of the building shown on it enable the medical staff to ascertain at a glance in which ward any patient is to be found (a name ticket fits into each ward space) and where vacancies are or can be made. The X-ray apparatus on the left enables the patient's latest radioscope to be rapidly reviewed. The same standardised furniture is used in this room as throughout the building, except that the armchairs are upholstered.

The former holds 120 patients, subdivided into groups of 20 couches; the latter only 24, split up into four-couch units. Structural provision has been made for the same dual system of small groups throughout the sanatorium, with the object of giving each a different human character. This enables the individual to be sure of finding something approximating to his own *milieu*; and allows him to obtain necessary mental change by periodic transferences from group to group.

In plan the building is an irregularly-pointed star, from the centre of which the long cantilevered balconies of the seven-storied patients' wing project S.S.E. like a huge upended toast-rack. The wards—which get the full morning sun on their beds, and the afternoon sun on the upper part of their windows—all face south, and are connected by side corridors. The nursing staff live 'as though they were themselves tubercular subjects', but in a separate wing with a different orientation so as to allow them a sense of having 'a private life of their own' as well. It is characteristic of Aalto that in planning the two isolated rows of small houses for the non-nursing staff he treated them as practical experiments towards a solution of the problem of the minimum dwelling. The kitchen is a single room, visibly controlled from any point, the subsidiary parts of which are separated by hanging glass screens that form a series of barrages to prevent the dissemination of odours and gases. As a result there is no opening and shutting of doors. The various public rooms are never simultaneously in full sunlight. Each offers a restful change of panorama on an uninhabited forest landscape. In the clinical and administration wing the rooms have higher south than north walls, so that sunshine can penetrate every corner of them.

The 'positive' concrete framework is duplicated by a 'negative' skeleton of shafts and ducts to which screwed-up doors in the corridors give access. This enables the lighting and plumbing of any room to be repaired without entering it. Tubercular patients are peculiarly sensitive to noise. Aalto insists that the acoustic properties of the average hospital ward are far too 'brutal', because too little use is made of 'soft' walling materials. At Paimio each ward has three 'hard' walls and one 'soft' one—the latter being covered with insulated boarding on which rolls of a special sound-absorbent cellular preparation are laid like linoleum. They are enamelled a dull shade, with the ceiling in a somewhat darker tone, so as to improve the patient's 'room morale', as a result of investi-



Wood plastic model of rather 'surrealist' appearance to illustrate the elastic properties of plywood as applied to chair construction
Designed by Alvar Aalto and Aino Marsio-Aalto

gating the psychological effects of the horizontal position, a subject that has hitherto received comparatively little attention. The heating was just as scientifically studied. Experiments with the type of ceiling-panels ultimately adopted proved that solid objects, like beds, are much more quickly warmed than the air itself (actually the floor warms quickest, followed by the window panes). The patient lies—and lying represents 60–100 per cent. of his time according to the seriousness of his case—in the mild zone of radiation, where a comfortable feeling of physical warmth can be enjoyed with a room temperature of only 14–16 degrees Centigrade. The ventilation intake between the tops of the (climatically inevitable) double windows produces a minimum movement of dust; and enables it to sink more rapidly, and so simplifies its removal. The lighting point is outside the patient's normal angle of sight. From the bakery bread-trolleys to the tubular steel bedsteads and the glass spittoons every fitment has been designed or co-ordinated by the architect and his wife. Each patient has a separate built-in wash-basin in which the water falls at an angle of 30 degrees, so as to eliminate splash and noise; and a plywood wardrobe and armchair.

This brings us to what some people might consider 'another side' of Aalto's work: the standardised plywood furniture, which has made him famous throughout Europe. For Aalto, however, design—whether of a concrete building or a wooden chair—means patiently discovering the right construction for a given material applied to a particular purpose; and then simplifying the crude 'functional' form that results into its most rational and economic shape. There is no space to speak of the revolutionary construction of that furniture; and as it happens, fortunately, no need, for it is now being shown at Fortnum and Mason's. It is in connection with the physical arrangement of this little exhibition that Herr and Fru Aalto are paying their first visit to England.



Standardised wooden 'nesting' stool, with a stalagmite-like interlocked pile of the same stools stacked on the right

These stools have knuckle-joints of special spliced construction which make them ideal for rough use

Designed by Alvar Aalto

Two new volumes of camera work which illustrate the latest tendencies in pictorial photography are *The Studio* photography annual *Modern Photography* 1933–4 (wrappers, 7s. 6d.) and *Photographie* 1933–4 which is a French production published here by Batsford (10s. 6d.). The former contains an interesting article on Technical Progress in Photography, as well as an introduction by E. O. Hoppé. The latter is remarkable for the excellent quality of the reproduction of the photographs included. An interesting *tour de force* is a series of portraits by Hoyningen of Princess Nathalie Paley done after the style of Cecil Beaton, Man Ray, Baron de Meyer and David Octavius Hill.

Our Prison Population

By JOHN STEVENSON

The Home Office recently set up a Departmental Committee of Inquiry on Imprisonment for Debt. Mr. Stevenson, who was for some time an Honorary Visitor at Pentonville Prison, and has assisted in the work of the 'Poor Man's Lawyer' at Toynbee Hall, here discusses the present composition of our prison population

A—'S been in prison'. Such a remark about anybody is still sufficiently character-blasting to need a great deal of explaining away. It is therefore very desirable everyone should know something about our prison population, who they are, and why they are there. A month or two ago the Home Secretary appointed a knowledgeable Committee to explore the important question of imprisonment for 'civil' offences—as distinct from 'crimes', and to try and discover a workable alternate method instead of putting these people in gaol. I say it is an important question because I have just been studying the 1931 Report of the Prisons Commissioners, recently issued. On the very first page the compilers write:

Persons found guilty of serious crimes form only a small proportion of the total number of persons sent to prison.

Out of every 100 men committed to prison in 1931 there were 24 committed by civil process for failure to pay monies due under Court orders and 17 committed for failures to pay fines. There were also 14 committed on remand or for trial and not subsequently sentenced to imprisonment. These three classes of cases accounted for 55 per cent. of the receptions. Of the remaining 45 many were sentenced for such offences as disorderly conduct, begging, sleeping out and offences against the Poor Law and Police Regulations. Sentences for indictable offences accounted for only 26 out of every 100 men received into prison, and included among the 26 were many cases of men convicted of minor larcenies or frauds and sentenced for periods of a few weeks. Out of every 100 receptions of men the number due to crimes sufficiently serious to entail sentences of over three months was 15. Out of every 100 receptions of women the corresponding figure was 9.

When Imprisonment Does No Good

Examining the Commissioners' statements in a little more detail, it may surprise many to learn that about seven thousand men have been committed to prison, in any year since 1925, for failure to comply with wife maintenance orders, or to pay the weekly sums as directed by the magistrates in respect of illegitimate offspring. The periods of imprisonment are usually from six weeks to three months, and, as with all other committals having to do with civil debts, the offender would be set at liberty directly he paid up. In most instances, though not by any means all, he can pay, but will not, because he has a grievance, and would rather 'do the time' than produce the cash. It is difficult to see what useful object is served by imprisonment of maintenance or affiliation offenders. When making the committal order, magistrates seek to soften the blow by saying 'Now you'll have a clean sheet when you come out'—meaning there will be no arrears: while, of course, the husband or parent can hardly be expected to pay for the period he is in gaol. Under this system the man nurses his grievance, and the wife or mother scores no financial benefit. It may fairly be added that the 7,000 figure might well be swelled to double or treble were it not that many women hesitate to take drastic steps. In a sentence their attitude may be summed up as, 'he's been a bad man to me, but I'll not have him locked up'.

No doubt the Committee deliberating the whole matter will consider whether the power of 'garnisheeing' salary and wages, now possessed by the High Court, can profitably be extended. If so, not only will the prison population be reduced, on the above account, by about a quarter, but the committals for non-payment of fines will also show a marked decrease.

In all 9,051 men and 2,492 women went to prison in 1931 in default of paying fines. These totals account for half the women in prison for any reason, and 28 per cent. of the men. With four thousand men and over seventeen hundred women the offence was drunkenness. 'No money? Fourteen days!' Here again it seems to the writer the alternative is absurd. A large proportion of the offenders appear several times a year, and smilingly accept the prospect of a few weeks in the local gaol. The man or woman who cannot take drink without becoming a public nuisance ought not to be allowed to have it. Fine the supplier then, or, at least, make the supply to the habitual drunkard as difficult and expensive as possible. Even Mr. A. P. Herbert ought not to object to that, remembering the 'Riverside Nights' song—

Please sell no more drink to my father
It makes him so strange and so wild!

A year or two ago I heard Mr. Justice Swift give 'such a dressing down' to the 'Great Unpaid' of a certain Southern shire. They had kept an accused man locked up for over four months, in default of substantial bail, to await trial. When the Assizes came, the Judge, who had naturally studied the deposi-

tions, told the Grand Jury the evidence was flimsy in the extreme, and advised them to return 'No True Bill'—which they did. Mr. Justice Swift, then said what he thought over the refusal of bail, with the result, one would imagine, that the particular petty sessional division in question will give all applications meticulous attention in future! It is a very good thing the Judges do have this strong regard for the liberty of the subject, for while, on the one hand, the police naturally do not want to let Burglar Bill loose to carry out further crimes in the interim, it is inequitable to confine unduly any whom a jury may later declare 'Not Guilty'. In 1930, over 7,500 men and women, afterwards acquitted, spent some weeks or months in custody, in default of bail, or because this was refused. In 1931, this total rose sharply to nearly 9,000.

Imprisonment of Young Persons

A welcome feature in the Commissioners' report is the decrease, averaged over the past ten years, in the number of young people sent to prison. In 1927 only 568 youths and 34 girls were certified fit subjects for Borstal treatment; 2,221 young men, and 147 young women had to go to prison. Now the Borstal figures are 873 and 47 respectively, the latter 1,883 and 119. Readers, however, must not jump to the conclusion that judges and magistrates do not make every effort to avoid imposing the 'criminal brand'. Of the 1,883, over a thousand had previous proved offences. The Commissioners say: 'Many had records of numerous previous offences, and *prima facie* it would seem that Borstal sentences would have been more appropriate for many of these youths than sentences of imprisonment'.

Short terms of gaol for bad boys and girls are quite useless. Successive Home Secretaries have again and again urged the Bench to this effect, but unfortunately many magistrates still disregard this sensible advice. Probation also is well enough in its way, but it should not be abused, or the consequence to the community (and the individual) may be very serious.

The fact that a short sentence is passed does not necessarily imply that the offence itself was of a petty nature. Judges and magistrates are only human. Their method of dealing with the prisoners before them varies considerably. But in general we may assume that where the period of confinement is not more than a single month, the crime cannot have been very heinous; 73 per cent. of the women and 53 per cent. of the men are within this category. Of both sexes, nine out of ten offenders received terms of not more than six months. Nearly half of 'without the option' sentences were for drunkenness, begging, offences against the Poor Law, and assaults. Simple and minor larcenies account for one in eight of the prison population in 1931.

'Real' Criminals

I suppose most of us, if asked what we understood by a 'real' criminal, would answer by example—the calculating murderer, the bank robber, or the perpetrator of arson or 'long-firm' frauds: To what extent these join the weaker members of the craft in gaol, in proportion to the crimes 'known to the police', has never been clearly answered. My own view is that the number who, from beginning to end, never make the fatal error of transgressing the 'Eleventh Commandment' is as small as the number now undergoing penal servitude—one per cent! Sooner or later they trip, and the Assize Judge deals out their just reward. The recent increase of 'breaking in' cases (*vide* Home Office report, June, 1933) is stated 'not to be due to the professional criminal', but mainly to young persons who break into small houses or shops, temporarily unoccupied, which are easily entered, and take articles of comparatively little value. Undoubtedly, the heavy total of unemployment is a main basic cause of the rise in this type of offence.

Perhaps the biggest problem for penologists is the recidivist (habitual criminal). Take drunkenness, for example: over 600 women and above 400 of the men imprisoned in 1931 had served more than twenty sentences each on liquor laws charges. Recidivists, many mentally unstable or abnormal, also constitute a very large proportion of sex offenders. Up to a very few years ago any suggestion of attempting to cure them by psychotherapy treatment would have almost been laughed at by officialdom. Now a successful beginning has been made, and the space devoted in the Report to the results of Dr. Norwood East's observations is a happy and hopeful sign of future extension.

*The Modern Columbus—IV**From New Orleans to New Mexico*

By S. P. B. MAIS

Broadcast from Santa Fé on Friday, November 3

LAST Saturday, in New Orleans, I saw my first game of American football. It was a glorious hot sunny afternoon, and the sight of the smartly dressed college girls in summer frocks promenading, before the match, on smooth lawns with trellis work of rose-pink vines, reminded me of Ascot, while the excitement and the game reminded me of the Oxford and Cambridge rugby match. Undergraduates in white stood on platforms and led songs and hand-clapping, and green caps were thrown wildly into the air as they finished with the tunes of 'Horses and Waggon' and 'John Brown's Body'. The singing and the cheering went on with hardly a pause throughout the game; and the cheer leaders must have been far more exhausted even than the players, for the game itself is made up of a long series of pauses and rests punctuated by wildly exciting rushes that last perhaps three seconds. I found it intensely thrilling to watch this battle of heavily padded giants fighting to gain an inch here and a foot there through an almost impenetrable barrier of tacklers—thrilling and partly comic, for at the end of every staccato stab and thrust there is an interval during which the tacklers run back a little and then form a huddled circle with their heads down together, and whisper the next move to be adopted, and then form up in another grand rush. Every pass, kick and tackle was greeted by a wild roar from the crowd which spent most of its time on its feet, and at half-time there was a sort of Lord's promenade of Old Boys who sang the songs of their Universities.

Bigger and Better Circuses

I spent the rest of Saturday at a circus. In the early morning, shortly before dawn, I breakfasted in the mess tent, one half of which was occupied by the men who put up the tent. They had to be content with a tin mug and no tablecloth. The other half was for the performers, who drank out of china cups and had a pink tablecloth. Nearly the whole of New Orleans turned out to watch the parade of elephants, clowns and caged beasts through the city during the morning; and at night I saw the performance. In the side-shows tent there was a giant weighing 45 stone fast asleep, and next door was a little woman who was very much awake, who weighed 2 stone, and a very cultured little man lectured upon a petrified corpse he wanted us to see; but the crowd were much more excited by the sight of a Scottish family in kilts playing the bagpipes. That was far more wonderful to them than any counter-attraction of snake charmers, or fire-eaters, or even Siamese women with giraffe-like necks in vast coils. The circus itself was just like everything else I have seen in America—on a mammoth scale: in fact there were three circuses going on at once. But easily the finest thing about it was a young man who, having gone out of his way to rouse to fury with a whip and a revolver a cage containing, I think, 10 lions, 2 bears and 6 tigers, kept them all at bay armed only with one light cane chair. It was the most hair-raising thing I have ever seen in a circus; though the sight of a young lady up in the roof hanging only by her wrists, and turning over and over 64 times, was scarcely less enthralling. And the pea-nut eating audience waxed just as enthusiastic over the circus as the coca-kola drinking audience had at the football game.

I left New Orleans at 10.40 on Saturday night, by an extremely comfortable train called 'Sunset Limited', and I spent Sunday crossing Texas—and that was my first experience of the prairie. I passed vast oil wells and lonely ranches, where cowboys in huge hats were tending cattle, and everywhere there seemed to be turkeys. I passed a succession of white German villages, and on all sides a wide open space of scrub covered the prairie, the earth of which was sometimes red, sometimes a burnt yellow, and sometimes black. Its surface was covered with the green spade-like cactus, unluckily not in flower. In the spring this land is covered with the Texas blue-bonnets, like our bluebells, and yellow and red cactus plants. And then, in the middle of a broiling afternoon, I arrived at San Antonio, where I found the most moving and colourful ceremony in the Festival of Christ the King taking place in the Mission of the Conception, attended by about 8,000 people.

San Antonio has five of these Missions, each of them 3 miles apart, and each one a striking example of the faith and the architectural artistry of the earliest Spanish Franciscan friars who built them. In 1836 a faithful band of 178 followers defended one of these missions for twelve days against the Mexicans, and then died fighting, thereby arousing their fellow citizens to fight for Texan independence. You can just gauge Texan history from the fact that she has served under no less than six flags. These Missions are now in ruins, but the

exquisitely carved windows and rails and beautiful square bell towers still remain.

San Antonio, which was for some time the home of O. Henry, is one of the most enchanting cities I have yet visited—not least because of its beauty and its Spanish architecture. The old Spanish Governor's Palace, built in 1720, and very skilfully restored by the Conservation Society—which is the equivalent in America of the National Trust here—is one of the most satisfying relics of old America, and is typical of the houses in this area. It was a most refreshing change from the grey wooden-frame houses to come to this one-storied flat-roofed yellow house which look like Malaccan forts with their projecting gun-like black gutters. The windows are protected by square iron grilles, and the rooms are lofty and dim and have stone flags and stone shelves let into the walls, and glorious fireplaces with long tapering chimneys just like fools' caps, and everywhere filigree iron-work of the most delicate design.

Nothing Wrong with the Younger Generation

These houses are mainly built around a patio or courtyard, with fountains in the middle and huge yucca trees, with porcupine-like leaves. But San Antonio's fame is not confined by any means to the old and historical; it is also the Aldershot and the Cranwell of the United States, and it contains the largest military barracks in the States. I saw peacocks and deer having a siesta on one of the barrack grounds; and at Randolph Field is the largest air force training centre in the world, which was an eye-opener of military efficiency. I was shown 2,300 acres of perfect landing ground. The officers each have a detached house, built on the Spanish plan with a spacious garden; there is also a theatre in which new films are shown every day, but I was most interested in the Cadet College. Each cadet has a combined bedroom-study; north and south the walls are almost entirely made up of open window space to enable him to keep cool. Indeed, Randolph Field, together with the football game I saw last Saturday, provided me with a convinced hunch that the young generation over here is being treated on as sound lines as anybody could wish, morally and physically. They are a grand lot, these young undergraduates and young flying men.

San Antonio has a magnificent waterway, a municipal auditorium capable of holding 6,000 people, and a park which extends for 540 acres, in which I found everything free—free golf, free polo, free grids for picnickers to light their fires and heat their meals, a free open air sunken-garden theatre, and even a free zoo, with bear-pits and a place for the monkeys all cut out of the natural rock; and in the reptile garden I saw rattlesnakes crawling over each other, huddled in corners and being stirred to rattle by a completely fearless keeper who wandered among them picking some up with a cloth-bound stick, and picking others up with a bandaged hand. He had been bitten by one the day before. I stood on a bridge a few feet above them and listened to the rattles, and the noise was just like that of a cicada or a very loud grasshopper. Some were curled up ready to strike, but they seemed to think better of it and subsided into calm as the keeper passed on. Two snakes were sloughing their skins.

Over the Border

As an excitement in another direction I spent the evening in the Mexican quarter. We sat eating highly seasoned Mexican dishes in the open, while side-whiskered, dark-eyed Mexicans sang Spanish songs accompanied by guitars, and after two days at San Antonio I continued my journey in the 'Sunset Limited' on Tuesday, at 3.15, and spent the hottest afternoon of my trip sweltering and looking out of the closed carriage windows on to more and more miles of this cactus-covered prairie, while the rest of the train was composed of the football team going to San Francisco. They think nothing of going a thousand miles each way to play a game. They whiled away the time reading Herodotus, medical treatises, playing patience, and having their hair cut. I passed one ranch reputed to be a million acres in extent. And 8.30 Wednesday morning I got to El Paso, and found to my astonishment that there was a mountain wind blowing cold and it was raining. America is certainly a land of quick contrasts. Here were dark women walking about swathed in black shawls, and film stars in furs and trousers, and above me, on the mountain sides, were silver, copper and gold mines. This is the Camborne of America—the Texan School of Mines. At my feet the shallow green water of that great river, the Rio Grande, wended its way to the Gulf of Mexico on a bed of pure yellow sand. On the other side of the bridge lay the Republic of Mexico. The authorities kindly allowed me to go over, and in a few minutes I was in a hurry. The town has a casino, a bull ring and goodness knows

how many bars, and after being made an I.B.F. in Harry Mitchell's café I was whisked back over the frontier, the richer by a pair of silver inlaid spurs and a fleeting impression of dark-skinned men standing about at street corners.

New Mexican Panorama

I arrived just in time to catch my 'bus for New Mexico. We left El Paso with its oleander trees and suburbs at 10.30, and had



A New Mexican Village

Photograph: Dorian Leigh

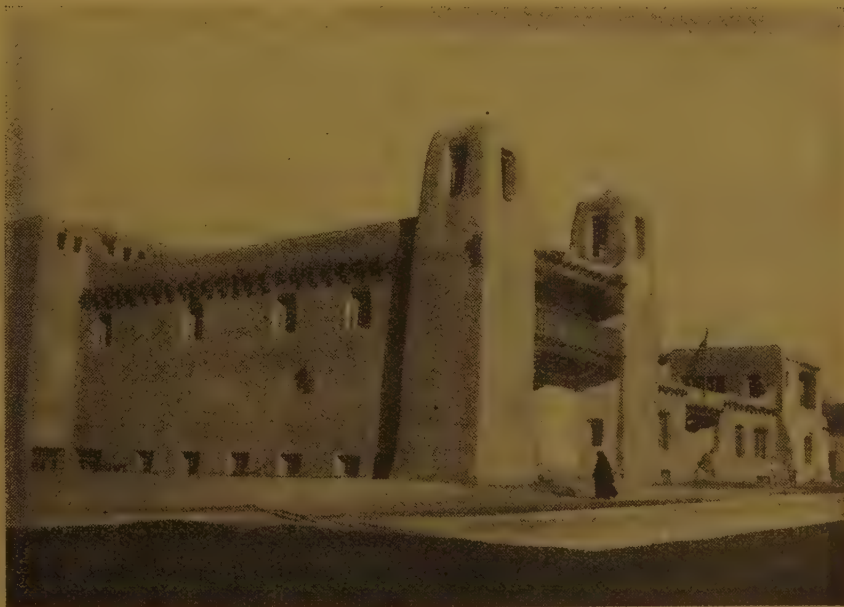
a 370 miles drive in front of us; it was the wildest 370 miles I have ever encountered. To begin with, there were vast fields of cotton being picked by coloured people, and passing to and fro were mule-drawn wagons filled with loose cotton. And then almost imperceptibly there was no more cotton but instead small fields of a more vivid green than I thought possible; these were fields of alfalfa, the richest fodder there is, and near them were very crude one-roomed cabins made of logs, very rough, and covered with straw; and all the time the dull green winding river of the Rio Grande, with its vast sandy bed, would keep appearing and disappearing. But the great difference lay in the mountains—range after range appeared, rising sheer out of the scrub-covered prairie. They all looked as though they were just in front of you—and they were, of course, miles away. The nearest were the Organ Mountains, jagged, bare, just like organ pipes in appearance, or the uneven tongues of a half-broken comb. The wind rose, and the wild prairie dust swept over the landscape, and great grey and black clouds stacked themselves on the mountain tops, enveloping, it seemed to me, the whole world. Then there were rifts and shafts of sunlight, and the ranges took on every conceivable colour known to man. One would be rose-tinted, another blacker than ink, a third deep purple, a fourth gold, a fifth red and yellow, and a sixth green. It was my first experience of mountains here; it seemed to be a new world—of inhospitable plain bounded by the illimitable distance of these strange-shaped peaks. It was as though all the colours of heaven had been dropped haphazard on to these hill-tops, and the sense of utter loneliness was emphasised by a chalked notice board—'Next town 57 miles'. And the strangeness of it all was made stranger still by the unexpected sight of one last log cabin hung with vivid red chili-peppers. At times I caught a sight of the flash of the waters of the Elephant Butte Dam which ran somewhere near us for forty or fifty miles. And in one canyon we came across a bunch of half-a-dozen cowboys with lassoes rounding up a herd of cattle in a blinding rainstorm.

At Santa Fé

At last we joined the railroad lines, and eventually drew into Albuquerque, where, after dinner in an enormous hotel, we set off by car on the final stage of our journey, in the bright moon-

light, to Santa Fé. Here we were 7,000 feet up, and I felt very cold, having just arrived from the hottest city in the United States. As I looked out of my bedroom window, snow lay on the high mountains, 15,000 feet above sea-level, and the first thing I did was to shed my tropical clothes and encase myself in wool and lambskin before going out to see the sights. Indoors I was roasted, and as soon as I poked my nose out of doors I was frozen. It was all very strange; the day before yesterday I was in a land of electric fans, scarcely able to walk in the noon-day sun, but today I wanted to run up to the top of the mountains to keep warm. I am partly deterred from doing this by the fact that these mountains are inhabited by bears, wild cats and mountain lions, and partly by the fact that in the rarefied atmosphere of 7,000 feet, a sensible man does not run or climb on his first day. I have at last met my first Indian. I am now, of course, on the threshold of the reservations of the Indians—I saw Navahos, Zunies, and Apache Indians, and Igloos. At Santa Fé there is a state boarding school for these Indians, and I spent a very happy hour yesterday wandering over this school watching Indian boys playing basketball, carving furniture and hammering silver jewellery, and in an untidy dormitory I found two Indian girls cutting off their beautiful, glossy, long black hair to conform to the prevailing fashion. Other girls were making evening frocks for a dance, others were listening to the radio, and some enjoying a siesta. They all smiled easily, and spoke perfect English. The mural paintings in their dining hall and the patterns of their rugs are extraordinarily beautiful.

From the Indian School I drove back over baked-up scrub land, further up into the mountains. Santa Fé is a small town of yellow Spanish houses, built of adobe—a mixture of mortar and straw and clay—standing among trees which are now at this moment wearing their exquisite autumn tint of pure gold. The sun is shining out of a cloudless sky, and the brown mountains, the tops of which are just lightly peppered with snow, are in shape rather like the Cairngorm Ridge. The air is keen, exhilarating and pure. The streets are full of Spanish-speaking caballeros, the handsomest set of men I have ever set eyes on. The scenic beauties call tourists from all over the world to come and visit it, and great artists and writers to settle for their lives. It must easily be the most romantic place in this hemisphere, if not in the world. But to me its outstanding



Architecture of Santa Fé—at the end of the famous trail

Photograph: E. O. Hoppé

interest lies in the great courage and fortitude of the pioneers who founded it. It lies, of course, at the foot of the famous Santa Fé trail, but that comes in from the North, and I have still to explore it from that way. I have been thinking all the way, as I crossed that mountain plateau, of the Spanish Franciscan friars and the Conquistadors who came in by the Rio Grande from the South. The ringing of the Angelus outside my bedroom window is a constant reminder to me of the faith that conquered these mountains.

'The Debate Continues'—V

Meeting the Nation's Needs

By Major the Hon. OLIVER STANLEY, M.P.

I EXPECT that all of you, whatever your politics, must sympathise with me in my task. This is the fifth in the series of talks for or against the National Government. Two evenings have already given Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Thomas ample opportunity to touch upon all that is to be urged in its favour; two evenings have provided for Mr. Lansbury and Mr. Greenwood more time than they could really use to say all that can be said against it. I am supposed to find something new to say on what is to all of you an old topic, and a simple one, depending as it does on three questions, all of which you can answer for yourselves, out of your own experience. What were things like in August, 1931, when the National Government came into being? Are they better today? And if so, how much of that improvement is due to the National Government and would end with it?

Try and cast your mind back to the autumn of 1931, and remember the pall of hopelessness and fear which lay over the country, and which affected alike all classes and all interests. If you were in employment, then all around you works were closing, businesses failing, and at any moment it might be your turn to join the army of unemployed which had been growing week by week and month by month for over two years. If you were an employer, you were finding it harder to make ends meet, prices were falling, confidence was waning, your foreign markets were being closed one by one as the result of political intervention, while your home market remained as before open to the dumpers of the world. If you were dependent on a fixed income, whether it came from invested savings, from a State salary or from unemployment relief, you were beginning to wonder how much longer when you went into a shop your pound would be worth twenty shillings or your shilling twelve pence.

1931 and Today

That was September, 1931. And today? There are many sets of figures by which we can judge the progress of a country, but I am not going to deal with figures here, for figures, even if they cannot lie, can often be made to serve quite contradictory arguments. I am going to appeal not to figures, but to you. You know someone who has gone back to work; you know someone whose business is looking up; you know of a chimney that is smoking again or a factory where gates are no longer locked; and whatever figures may prove or politicians may say, you are not going to deny that things are better. It is not prosperity, far from it; it is not even the moderate comfort we knew in 1929; but it is an improvement on 1931; it means hope instead of despair.

And what is it due to? Mr. Lansbury on his part says it is due to luck, that when his party was in, the world was going down and we went down with it: now we are in, the world is going up and we are going up too. But there is this one great difference. When the world was going down we fell faster than anyone else: now it may be—I should like to think so—that we are all going up but this country is leading the rise. There is something more in that than just luck: it takes more than luck to turn the contempt of the world into admiration and its pity into envy.

Our financial policy has had something to do with it. With difficulty and with hardship, with sufferings, it is true, caused both by taxation and by economies, we have balanced our budget and we have restored confidence in our financial stability. Our tariff policy has had something to do with it. Some of you have been doing a job today which two years ago was being done by a foreigner: you are getting the wages he was getting; your local shop and your co-operative stores are selling today to you what he used to buy in his shop in his country. Our agricultural policy has had something to do with it. The past year has witnessed the first real attempt to devise an agricultural policy which will at the same time give a fair reward to the producers and ensure to the consumers the economies which result from efficiency of marketing.

And if the break-up of the National Government were to mean the break-up of its policy, if with it were to disappear all

that it had done, if it meant unbalancing our budget again, sweeping away tariffs, throwing away our power to bargain with others—if it meant, in a word, a return to 1931—then with the National Government would go all these signs of returning prosperity which today we note and cherish. It may be true that hope is knocking at the door, but despair is still only round the corner.

But enough about the past: the case for the National Government is, I believe, proved up to the hilt: now for what it still has to do. I do not intend to deal here with the immediate problems which face the National Government—a budget, balanced it is true, but balanced at a level which demands almost intolerable sacrifices both through taxation and economies; a level of unemployment, which, though falling, still constitutes a menace to your existence; an external trade showing signs of recovery but still abnormally low; agricultural prices which in some cases give no adequate return; peace and disarmament; India; any one of which problems could be the subject of a separate talk.

What Would State Ownership Mean?

I am looking still further ahead. If there is one point on which I agree with Mr. Lansbury, it is when he says that with a return even to what we could call prosperity we should have a mass of human suffering still to deal with. How are we going to deal with it? His answer is quite simple: he says we cannot, that nothing we might have done in the past or may do in the future is any good, that nothing is any good as long as we do not believe in 'production for use and not for profit'. Personally I am not interested in that kind of phrase-making. From my own department, I could give you plenty of instances of municipalities which produce electricity for use but do not sell it nearly as cheaply as companies which produce it for profit, and it is the result which matters to me. When I am told we should hand over to the State the ownership and control of industrial production, I want to know what it is going to do. Can you sell cotton cheaper than Japan because the State owns your mill, or produce better beef off Government meadows? Will tariffs which block the products of private ownership be lowered for the passage of Government goods?

And what of the dangers! With human nature as it is, I never have been able to see how anything but a competitive system will eliminate the out-of-date and give a chance to the up-to-date. I have often wondered what would have happened to motor transport in this country if twenty years ago all the railways had been owned by the State, if losses through road competition had fallen on the revenue of the budget instead of the dividends of the railway shareholder, and if, in the person of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the man who suffered the competition was the man in whose hands was the power to stop it. I wonder whether in those circumstances the motor industry would today be one of the greatest in the country.

Spur of the 'Money Motive'

There is another point. Whatever the future may hold for us, I believe that what the economists call the 'money motive'—that is, the desire for individual profit and individual property—is as strong as ever and as necessary as ever as a spur to individual endeavour. Mr. Lansbury in his talk quoted Ruskin: 'The soul of a nation is expressed in its architecture'. Well, let him look at the great new housing schemes which have grown up since the War, many of them the result of that municipal enterprise which he favours. He will seldom see the great blocks of flats, with their common entrances and their communal offices, which he would find in similar schemes all over the Continent. Here he will usually find houses alone, or at most in pairs, a tribute to the innate and undying individualism of the British people. Security first, and then opportunity; opportunity for individual success or individual failure, for saving or spending, for thrift or amusement. That is what the ordinary man desires and demands, and any system of the future which ignores him is doomed to fail.

But if human nature changes slowly, economic facts change

fast and it is no good shutting our eyes to the fact that some of the circumstances which made the capitalist system successful in the last century are no longer the same today. Last century was an age of steadily growing population all over the world, a sure increase of consuming power ready sooner or later to absorb any and every productive effort. Today in this country, and indeed in most of Western Europe, we have population stationary, even tending to decline. Obviously this fact must increase the danger which is always inherent in this competitive system—the danger of waste of effort, of enterprise, of skill, and of labour. That is our main problem for the coming years—to eliminate the waste of competition while retaining its incentive. The task is not an impossible one. Mr. Elliot's agricultural marketing schemes provide an example of how it can be attempted. The essence of these schemes is the elimination of waste by relating the production of an article to the possibilities of selling it. Of course, this means restriction on the individual, on the price at which he is to sell and the amount he is to produce. But it does not prevent individual skill and enterprise getting their proper reward: nor does it provide for the lazy or inefficient a vested right to success. In a much simpler form the Road and Rail Bill now before Parliament is another example. There is nothing there to stop a man succeeding if he is efficient, or failing if he is not, but there is something to stop skill and labour being wasted in providing transport which from a national point of view will never really be needed. Of course, every industry has its own special difficulties and it does not follow that a solution which happens to fit one can be applied generally to all. But somewhere along these lines we shall have in the next few years to work out our industrial salvation.

Agricultural Stability Must Be Re-established

So much for the changes we have got to make in our factory system, but is that enough? The factory system is a new thing as the history of a people goes, and at its best it provides for those engaged in industry a standard of material comfort which no other system could give them. To many that is all they ask. So long as the system is made to work properly, as wages are good, and hours are reasonable, and, above all, as employment is secure, they are content. But there are some for whom that is not enough, to whom nothing can make up for the loss of the independence which the factory system means and the loss of security which independence gives. For those there is, there must be, the land, and on the land a life, devoid perhaps of many of the amusements and some of the comforts which the towns can give, but a life of independence, of self-reliance and self-support, removed from the dangers and insecurity of industrial life. Until we are able to make the products of the soil give some reasonable return in price for the efforts of those who produce them, it would be unfair to these people to embark them on this life, but once

we succeed in re-establishing agricultural stability, we have here a means both of relieving the pressure in industrial employment and of giving health and happiness to thousands.

These are the problems we have to face: how much simpler is it for us as the followers of a National Government instead of a party! We have all of us got to give up something, something which predecessors in our party and which we ourselves have been proclaiming for years as the only political truths. How much easier to do it if the surrender of some of our ideas does not mean the triumph of the other fellows, if it does not mean that our party was wrong and the other party right, if it is just a recognition by all of us of new economic facts and the need of new policies to meet them.

Continuity of Plan and Persistence of Effort

To try and eliminate the waste of competition and retain its incentive may seem like trying to reconcile the irreconcilable. It can be done, I believe it is being done, but it needs continuity of plan and persistence of effort. Can we get it? All around us today we hear talk of dictatorships, of their destruction of individual liberty and their consequent paralysis of individual thought. But with all their evils, dictatorships have at least one advantage: they do give continuity. Your Mussolinis, your Hitlers, your Stalins can at least plan policies for their countries which they know will be carried to their conclusion, which will not be scrapped after the effort has been made and before the results have been attained by an electorate bored with effort and eager for change. Can democracy of its own free will ever give the continuity which the dictator gets by force? Sir Stafford Cripps and his friends do not think so. They warn you quite frankly that if you once give them and their policies a chance they will not risk your changing your minds.

If, after five years of the Socialist policy, when election time draws near, the electors show signs of dissatisfaction, then I gather there is to be what is euphemistically called 'a prolongation of the life of parliament for a further term without an election'—in other words, a continuance of a Socialist Government and a Socialist policy, whether you like it or not.

That is dictatorship. I have a greater belief in the possibilities of democracy. I believe it is possible for democracy of its own free will to give a policy which it approves a real chance of successful development: but only if you are prepared to ignore the non-essentials, the local difficulties or the personal grievances, the delay here or the mistake there, and to judge us by what is in the long run the only thing that matters to any of us, the general progress of the country. Judged by that standard I claim your verdict now, and judged by that standard I have no fear of forfeiting your confidence in the future.

Local Government

A Councillor Cross-Examined

By Dr. IVOR JENNINGS and LADY SIMON

DR. IVOR JENNINGS: I think, Lady Simon, that while I was talking about local government and local elections last week, you were being turned out of the Council in Manchester?

LADY SIMON: Yes, I am afraid that you will have to cross-examine an ex-councillor, not a councillor.

I. J.: You know that everybody complains about lack of interest in local government. Do you find that interest in elections in Manchester has increased or diminished?

LADY S.: I don't think there has been much change; about 44 per cent. of the electors usually vote.

I. J.: I think that this difficulty of getting people to vote is a real problem. Birmingham for many years led the way in municipal development, yet less than 36 per cent. voted last week, and very few boroughs showed a poll of more than 50 per cent. I suppose you would agree that local government can easily become inefficient, if not corrupt, if the electors don't take enough interest in it?

LADY S.: Certainly. But I don't quite see what can be done about it. One difficulty, I think, is that we have an election every year to fill only one-third of the seats on the council. That means that the election will not necessarily alter the

party complexion of the council. People get bored with frequent elections, and anyhow it may take three years to turn out a party majority. I think that they might be more interested if we had a general election every three years.

I. J.: That may be so. But actually there is far more interest in the annual elections for town councils than there is in other elections, most of which are held every three years. Dr. Robson collected figures for the county council elections of 1925. In the East Riding of Yorkshire 43 out of 54 councillors were returned unopposed. In Cornwall only 3 seats out of 66 were contested; and in many places where elections were held, the poll was between 5 and 10 per cent. Rural district council elections are almost as bad. Of course, the difference is partly due to local patriotism. Every person in Manchester is interested in the government of Manchester, whereas I doubt if everybody in Lancashire outside the big towns is interested in what the Lancashire County Council does. The position in a rural district is even worse. People are interested in their own villages, but they aren't interested in the artificial collection of villages which form the rural district.

LADY S.: I am afraid that I am quite ignorant of local government in the country.

I. J.: My own little city of St. Albans provides a good example of the difference between borough elections and county elections. It has rather less than thirty thousand inhabitants. The City Council does very little outside the ordinary business of maintaining the streets and sewers, collecting refuse, building a few houses, and maintaining a few parks. The important body is the Hertfordshire County Council, which has control of such important functions as education, mental deficiency, maternity and child-welfare, and public assistance. But I am quite sure that everybody in St. Albans was far more interested in the city elections last week than they will be in the county council elections next March. By the way, did you put up as a party candidate?

LADY S.: Yes. As a Liberal. Manchester is one of the few large cities where the Liberal party still exists on the council. I am inclined to think that the party system helps to stimulate interest in local elections, although the electors do not vote on party lines nearly so strictly as they do in a Parliamentary election.

I. J.: Of course, part of our difficulty in discussing all these questions is that what is true of the Manchester City Council is not necessarily true of all local authorities.

LADY S.: That is so. My experience is entirely confined to Manchester. Of course, I frequently meet councillors from other cities, and I have discovered that what is true of Manchester is not true generally of Birmingham, for instance. Still less is it true of a county council, or a small borough or district council. And the problems of a parish council in a rural area are obviously entirely different.

I. J.: For one thing, the size of the Council varies enormously. For instance, some district councils have only seven or eight members.

LADY S.: Yes, and in Manchester we have a Council of one hundred and forty-four members—one hundred and eight councillors and thirty-six aldermen.

I. J.: That's an important point. It seems to me that a Council of, say, twelve or fifteen members, can decide things round a table. It is just a committee. Each member contributes his special knowledge. The final decision is in a real sense the decision of the Council; but I don't see how a Council of one hundred and forty-four members can do that.

LADY S.: Of course not. We don't try. Everything is referred to committees, and they do the real work. In Manchester we have about thirty committees. Each consists of about twenty members—some more, some less. And these twenty or so members can, as you say, decide things round a table.

I. J.: So really the work is done by the committees and not by the Council?

LADY S.: Not quite that. The essential practical discussion takes place in the committees. But apart from the Watch Committee, the committee concerned has no power to act on its decision. It reports to the Council at the monthly meeting and no action can be taken until the minutes are confirmed. Any member of the Council can move to refer back an item in the minutes and we then have a general discussion on the question. If the Council decides against the committee the matter goes back to the committee. It may then be dropped or a new proposal made to the Council.

I. J.: So your Council discussion is really a debate on one or two items of policy.

LADY S.: Yes. But they are not always important items. A few items on the agenda are discussed, most of them are not, and it is usually the big and important ones that are accepted without adequate discussion. I'm afraid that the chief desire of the chairman of every committee is that his minutes shall go through unchallenged. Of course, everything has been previously discussed in the committee. The Council is always prejudiced in favour of a committee: that is to say, a very strong case has to be made out, or a very feeble defence put up, before the Council votes to send back a report.

I. J.: Council meetings are open to the public and are reported in the newspapers, while committee meetings are held in private?

LADY S.: Yes, except that the meetings of the education and public assistance committees may be held in public. But there the position is much the same, because the real work is done by sub-committees.

I. J.: So the really valuable councillor is one who works hard in committees, while the councillor who appears to the public to be doing most is the one who makes frequent speeches, foolish or otherwise, in council meetings.

LADY S.: I agree; but in practice a reputation for hard work soon gets known, and the public is usually able to judge if a councillor talks sense or nonsense.

I. J.: Another point. Councillors, if I may say so with all respect, are not elected because they are good administrators, but because they are politicians.

LADY S.: I would not quite accept that. Although we stand as Liberal, Conservative and Labour, few of us are very active politicians. Also, very few questions are political when you get down to administration. Important committees in Manchester are appointed on a system of proportional representation, so that

all parties are represented. But in Manchester, unlike London, Sheffield, and some other towns, chairmanships are held irrespective of the politics of the councillor. For instance, even before the Labour Party was strong in the Manchester City Council, two of its members were chairmen—one of the Public Health and another of the Parks Committee—and two of the best chairmen that these committees have ever had.

I. J.: That is a good principle, I think. I take it that the chairman is an important person, because he discusses matters with the officials, and has to guide the committee on matters of policy and to defend them in the Council?

LADY S.: Yes. And actually politics enter very little into council work.

I. J.: What we really want are people with ideas who are also capable: administrators, whether they gained their experience in business, in university administration, in social service, or as trade union officials. But even if we attained that ideal, would the problem be solved? Haven't you to deal with a host of purely technical matters? How can you deal with such matters properly without technical knowledge?

LADY S.: I think the answer is that we haven't the technical knowledge and—apart from the Trading Committees, for gas, water and electricity—we are better without it. The officials possess the technical knowledge, and when councillors try to interfere with that side, it is, in my opinion, a mistake. For instance, the Education Committee never discusses, and I hope it never will discuss, the question of the curriculum of the schools; that is left to the teachers, and the Inspectors, both national and local. The function of the committee should be to settle questions of policy and to leave the carrying out of it to the officials. Of course, the official, if he is any good, really guides the policy of the committee, but the committee, when they adopt it, take full responsibility for it.

I. J.: All this shows the need for having really competent officials. What do you think of the tendency of ratepayers' associations and other bodies to attack the so-called high salaries which are paid to senior officials?

LADY S.: I think it is easily the most short-sighted of policies. A good official saves his salary over and over again, an inferior official wastes money by sheer incompetence. So long as the salaries and status of the chief officials are such as to attract the best men and preclude the danger of corruption, local government will be all right, but I am convinced that the greatest danger to local government in the future lies in the tendency which is shown in the organisations you mention, and sometimes in the political parties, to pay lower salaries. With regard to the officials of the trading departments—such as gas, electricity and transport—local government has to compete in the open market and private enterprise is ready to pay whatever is necessary to get the best men to run their big enterprises with capital and turnover running into millions of pounds.

I. J.: But there is no competition in the case of the other officials?

LADY S.: No, but the positions of the Medical Officer of Health, responsible for the health of thousands of people; of a Director of Education, responsible for expenditure in Manchester of nearly two million pounds; and of a Town Clerk responsible for the good government of a large city, to mention only a few, ought to be such as to attract the very best men. Although it is true that there are advantages in local government service as compared with private enterprise, security, and a pension—contributory—these will not be sufficient in themselves, unless salaries and status are improved to ensure a constant supply of the best men. University graduates are beginning to come into the municipal service and I hope that more of them will choose that career instead of the Civil Service, which has, so far, attracted the best of them.

I. J.: Of course, people attack public officials for other reasons, besides their alleged high salaries. It is always said, for instances that municipal offices are run on a system of *form*s and red tape.

LADY S.: That is much exaggerated. Of course a certain amount of red tape is inevitable because, as was pointed out in the discussion on the Civil Service, there must be uniformity of treatment when the cases are similar. But take our Education Department which is responsible for roughly 114,000 children. I am always struck with the amount of individual consideration that is given not only by the teachers, which is only to be expected, but by the administrative officials, in connection with applications for maintenance allowances which we award annually, medical treatment, children who are sent to industrial schools, or specially gifted children who when discovered by the teacher are given every chance to develop their gifts.

I. J.: What do you do in Manchester to keep up the standard of your personnel?

LADY S.: We have a periodical examination for boys and girls between fourteen and sixteen. Those who pass are put on the list for the department that they have chosen, and when there is a vacancy, the head of the department interviews them and selects one. He then enters the grading scheme as regards salary and promotion. Technical appointments are made at a later age, and these posts are filled by advertisement or appointment by the committee concerned.

I. J.: Are women equally eligible with men for all administrative posts?

LADY S.: Yes—in theory, but in practice we find in Manchester as in other towns, that women are not in fact promoted through the grading scheme to the more responsible posts. There is still a prejudice amongst heads of departments, who are all men, against promoting women to do much more than clerical work. Of course, this does not apply to inspectors in the education department—our deputy Chief Inspector is a woman—or to nurses.

I. J.: I think that you will find that in some places the Council actually delegates to the committees so that the committee has power to act without the prior consent of the Council. That isn't the case in Manchester, is it?

LADY S.: No.

I. J.: This is another example of differences among the authorities. A week or so ago, for example, a certain Council found that a committee had spent £1,400 on furnishing a retiring room for the women councillors. But the Council couldn't do anything even if they disapproved, because they had given the committee power to act, and the committee had already entered into contracts, which were of course binding on the Council.

LADY S.: That couldn't happen in Manchester.

I. J.: In any case, whether powers are delegated or not, I can see this difficulty, that everything, so to speak, becomes departmentalised. If a decision is taken by the Public Health Committee, the Medical Officer's Department knows all about it, but it doesn't follow that anybody else does. Exactly the opposite policy may be followed by the Housing Committee, and though the Surveyor's Department will know all about it, do the Medical Offices and the members of the Public Health Committee know?

LADY S.: There is co-ordination between the departments in Manchester in this way. Each committee has attached to it not only an official, like the Medical Officer, the Surveyor or the Director of Education, but also a committee clerk, who belongs not to the department but to the Town Clerk's staff. So when there is any possibility of overlapping, the Town Clerk's staff draw the attention of the officials and the committees to the point; for instance, in Manchester the same man, a member of the Town Clerk's staff, acts as Secretary to the Housing, Public Health, Town-Planning Committees and also to the committee which is developing our satellite garden town of Wythenshawe. This is to ensure that the committees which are most connected in their mutual operations are kept in touch with one another.

I. J.: So your Town Clerk's Department isn't merely a legal department. It is a general administrative department. Has the Town Clerk any general control over the other officials?

LADY S.: No, but he is the chief official and the one whom the other officials are always able to consult.

I. J.: Let us take a particular example of the lack of co-ordination which always finds its way into the comic papers. The Highways Department lays a new road. Then the Gas Department comes along and pulls it up to put down gas mains. Then the Electricity Department has it up again to put down cables. Then the Water Department lays water mains. Finally, the Post Office pulls up the road to put in telegraph cables. What do you do about that?

LADY S.: In Manchester we have an arrangement by which, at the beginning of the year the electricity, gas, water, paving departments, and also the Post Office, notify our City Engineer as to the approximate time at which they will want to disturb the highway. He then sends this time-table to all the departments concerned and they co-ordinate the work as far as possible. Of course, paper schemes don't always work out as was anticipated, and even if they do, circumstances arise which necessitate an unexpected disturbance. For instance, an individual firm which has moved its offices may want a higher power of electricity, and the new cable must be laid, or, as happened in Manchester the other day, the electricity department had just finished in one part and replaced the surface and the next day it had to be broken up by the gas department because someone reported a leakage. As a matter of fact no leakage was found, but of course the gas department could not take the risk.

I. J.: Do gas, water and electricity go in the same trench?

LADY S.: No, it wouldn't be safe; and besides when a new area is being developed, as gas, electricity and water have to pay their way and not become a burden on the rates, they cannot afford to bury their capital too long in advance of receiving a return—and that cannot happen until the new houses are occupied and people are paying for their gas and water, etc. The cost of the disturbance of the surface is less than the cost of having capital lying idle. I doubt if the general public always appreciates this fact.

I. J.: How do you stop one committee spending more than it should? Who looks after the financial position of the Council as a whole?

LADY S.: That's the job of the Finance Committee. Each Committee has to prepare its estimates annually and submit them to the Finance Committee, where they are very carefully considered. The City Treasurer—who is the chief financial officer—watches the estimates even before they are passed by

the committees. He tries and usually succeeds in getting them reduced before they are approved. Then when they come before the Finance Committee they are considered very carefully both individually and as a whole. If the Finance Committee is uncertain about any item, it asks for further explanation. And a sub-committee, with the City Treasurer, may visit a particular committee and ask for reductions if they think that this is justified—or if the total is going to mean an increase in the rates. Councillors are all very conscious of the ratepayers and their burdens. They are in much closer touch with them than the Member of Parliament in London is with the taxpayer, comfortably away in his constituency. Councillors live among the ratepayers and meet them every day.

I. J.: I daresay that is true of all local authorities. But I think you will find that your practice in Manchester is a good deal in advance of that in many other places. Still, though your system of financial control in Manchester is an excellent one, I suppose you are accused of extravagance. I suppose it is said of the Manchester councillors as it is said of others, that you don't mind spending other people's money?

LADY S.: Oh, yes; and it is a grossly untrue accusation. I am quite sure that I give more thought to spending other people's money than I do to my own. After all, it does not matter to anybody else if I waste my money; but other people's money is a great responsibility.

I. J.: Then why is the criticism made?

LADY S.: I think because the average ratepayer is not accustomed to doing business on the scale that city councillors have to do it. For instance, our education budget amounts to £1,879,000, rather more than half coming from the rates and the rest from taxes. People who see only a part of the education service don't realise the vast field over which it is spent. We have to provide schools, teachers, doctors, nurses, clinics, meals for necessitous school children, and so on. People find it difficult to believe that a smaller sum might not suffice. But in fact each branch of the service, especially nowadays, is working within the narrowest possible margin, and it is only by the greatest care and ingenuity that the amount allocated is not exceeded. Even if the committee were inclined to get slack about spending money, the officials would soon pull them up. My experience is that both councillors and officials have a very keen sense of the responsibility of being entrusted with public funds.

I. J.: You mention that a considerable part of the funds which you spend come from taxes. That means, I suppose, that the Board of Education partly pays the piper and so has some say in the calling of the tune? How far are you, in fact, free to do as you like in respect of education?

LADY S.: We have to submit our estimates to the Board of Education and get approval of our expenditure. We also submit the plans of new schools and of adaptations of existing buildings, and the Board's architects make suggestions if they wish.

I. J.: I suppose much the same applies to the other grant-aided services, like the police and housing?

LADY S.: Only the police are aided by a percentage grant as in the case with regard to education. The various housing Acts under which a grant per house is given by the Government give the Ministry of Health certain powers of control.

I. J.: Do you find that you are much spurred on or held back by the people in Whitehall?

LADY S.: I can really only speak from experience of control by the Board of Education of the work of the Education Committee. On the whole I think it is very good, except at times like the present when it is trying to cut down expenditure in ways that we do not all think advisable. But the Board of Education does far more than the Ministry of Health in keeping local authorities informed of what others are doing and in making valuable suggestions as a result of their nation-wide knowledge.

I. J.: What it comes to, then, is this. You have very considerable powers, generally you are helped by the Government Departments concerned. But you feel that some of them could help you a good deal more by telling you about the experiments which are being conducted in other places. And you believe that you could exercise those functions even better if the citizens of Manchester took a more intelligent interest in the government of their city?

LADY S.: Yes; but on the whole I am not sure that local government in England is not about the most hopeful form of democracy that exists at present. The councillors find the work intensely interesting. We are convinced that it is of great importance and in spite of our faults and failings which have been made very evident to some of us during the last few weeks, the majority of us—I speak as one of the minority—are returned by the electors when we come before them every three years. That shows, I think, that the ratepayers feel, on the whole, that experience in a councillor is an asset and that continuity in administration is desirable. But every year the problems of local government become more complex and Parliament is continually putting new duties upon local bodies. Unless the local government service attracts the right sort of councillors and the best officials, it will, I feel, inevitably break down.

The National Character—VII

The Yeoman Farmer

By ARTHUR BRYANT

PERHAPS the best answer that any Englishman could give to the question 'Who are the yeomen, the yeomen of England?' would be 'my great, great, great, great grandparents'. And this is still true, even though most of us today are townsmen and the sons of townsmen. For two centuries ago there were scarcely any real townsmen in England, and even those who lived in towns earned half their livelihood by farming and gardening in the surrounding countryside, as they still do in

and half individual and private is not derived from this far away method of agriculture. Anyway, for hundreds of years it was practised by our ancestors.

In addition to the village arable fields with their strips (they must have looked rather like a vast modern allotment) there was the village hayfield, in which each of the villagers had also his strip or strips and where, after the hay was taken up, he had the right to pasture his cattle. And beyond these fields lay the common or waste—heath, furze, and forest, unhedged and undivided. The soil of the common belonged to the Lord of the Manor, but his ownership was subject to the right of every householder to use it to feed so many cattle, horses, geese and swine and to cut as much fuel and turf as he could burn in his cottage. For the soil, divided after this simple manner, from which they earned their bread, our ancestors conceived a deep love. It is a love so deep that it still moves our hearts today even after a century and a half of town life. I often find myself as I travel about our country reminded of that glowing passage in which Cobbett speaks of one trait of our English peasantry: 'That most interesting of our objects that is such an honour to England and that which distinguishes it from all the rest of the world, namely, those neatly kept and productive little gardens round the labourers' houses, which are seldom undecorated with more or less of flowers. We have only to look at these to know what sort of people English labourers are'.

I am not trying to paint the picture of an idyllic age. The era of the free English rustic was not an easy one. If the earth of England was his mother, she gave him rough fare and hard work to earn it. The standard of living and hours of working of an English yeoman of three centuries ago would not do for us today. Nor, I imagine, would the stay-at-home life. Our forefathers seldom left their native village, and when they did so, they hardly ever went beyond the nearest market or assize town. Everything depended on locality and neighbourhood; what mattered to them was the state of the crops in the big field under Windmill Hill, and what Mrs. Jones across the way or Hume the blacksmith said, and all this counted for much more than the distant utterances of kings and parliaments. Outside their own little world everything was just a blank; a man from a neighbouring county was a foreigner. New ideas seldom came their way, and when they did they distrusted them—they were foreigners, too, in fact. But whatever had been tried and found to work, they stuck to with dogged persistence: prejudice, some may perhaps prefer



Yeomen at bowls

one little East Anglian town I know. And as far more of our long line of ancestors were farmers than townsmen (a fact we are apt to forget), the deeper we go down into our national character—cutting through the crust, as it were, of a century of town life—the more surely do we find the yeoman. Canada, New Zealand, Australia and British South Africa, as well as modern Britain, owe their being to the character and habits of a little nation of stubborn, independent yeomen farmers.

I am using the word yeoman in its widest sense to include all those who earned their living from the soil and had some control over the land they cultivated. In this sense there were two essential attributes of the yeoman—that he cultivated the ground and that he was independent. I don't mean completely independent—for by no means all yeomen were freeholders, and many were such small fry that they had to add to their earnings by a few days of hired labour on somebody else's ground. But, compared with the modern wage-earner or even the modern salary-earner (say an eminent civil servant) they were independent—because no one could lawfully deprive them of the means of earning their bread. A man who has that right, however scanty and hard-earned that bread may be, is a freeman: he may look the whole world in the face and speak out his mind without fear or favour. And the thing that most used to impress foreigners about England was that we were a nation of freemen. That, I think, was a very glorious thing to be. And even if we are a nation of freemen (in this broad sense) no longer, we are at least the descendants of freemen, and the love of liberty runs through our veins.

I want for a moment to carry you back to the life of the primitive village in which our yeoman forefathers lived. Around the village were the great arable fields—often several hundred acres in extent—in which the villagers had their strips of land: one or more in each of the great fields according to their rank and status. These strips were cultivated according to immemorial usage controlled by the manorial court—the agricultural court of the Lord of the Manor, which was guided in matters of disputed fact by a jury of villagers. The cultivation of the land was partly communal: the right to enjoy its fruits individual and personal. I am not at all certain that our curious genius in modern times for evolving institutions half public and statutory



Inspecting the haymaking

to call it. Their life was a round of routine, ordered by countless generations who had gone before.

Now to many people this probably sounds terribly narrow and dull. But when one examines their life a little more closely, one discovers it to have been far richer than one at first supposes. For if they lived life in a narrow compass, they experienced it within those limits very fully and completely: they may not have dug far but they dug deep. They perhaps only learnt one job, but they learnt it thoroughly and practised it as masters: and if they had to be content with rustic pleasures, they made those pleasures as delightful and varied as they could. All the year there followed a round of traditional feasts



Red Letter Days in country life in the eighteenth century: the Village Fair

Illustrations from Pyne's 'Microcosm'

and pastimes, in which the whole village took part—Twelfth Night, with its cakes and stories; Mothering Sunday and May Day, when, as the old chronicler Stow put it, 'every man would walk into the street, meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers'; the Whitsun holiday whose rites varied in every village—at one Oxfordshire hamlet I know all the maidens of the place turned out with their hands tied behind their backs and hunted a fat lamb, and the one who caught it by the tail with her mouth was crowned Queen and presided at the Feast next night. Then there was the wrestling and dancing of Midsummer Day, the harvest supper and All Hallow's E'en; the mumming players at Christmas and the spiced ale of the Wassail Bowl that was carried round from door to door on New Year's Eve: as Herrick puts it

Thy Nut-brown mirth; thy Russet wit;
And no man payes too deare for it.

The most ordinary occurrences of everyday these peasant ancestors of ours invested with some significance and beauty; for instance, in Huntingdonshire, when the maids brought home the milk of an evening they used to do so with garlands and music. They were grateful for life, simple as it was, and made it a gracious and a beautiful thing. And to everything local they gave a traditional meaning and a name. I have just been glancing through the field names of an Oxfordshire parish—and I have picked some of them out just at random—Ward's Close, Pintle Hill, Greens, Briar Gap, Holly Bush, Sallies, Hixes Wood, Banbury Bottom, Bobwell Corner, Old Horse Hitchin, Swift Water, Great Conygree, Bar Acre, Shepherd's Ground, Smock Acre, Vetch Hill, Pig Hole, Adjoining Rainbow, Lord's Close, Under Badger Hedge, Joiners Close, Sheep Croft and Lady Meadow. They sound like music to an English ear.

The great age of this English rustic world was between the middle of the sixteenth and the middle of the eighteenth century—between the accession of Elizabeth and the beginning of the industrial revolution. It was then that the yeoman was at his greatest—free from the lowly status of mediæval villinage and not yet stripped of his independence by tenant farming to the larger gentry. Foreigners who came here were always directed to the yeoman as the central glory of England—'the mightiest men of bone in her full bosom bred' as the Elizabethan Speed put it—

the backbone of her strength and prosperity and the guardian of the national character. Englishman after Englishman painted the yeoman's picture with pride. And when Shakespeare's King Henry V wishes to rouse the uttermost power of England's fighting men he cries out:

And you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture.

With the enclosures of the latter eighteenth century the golden age of English yeomanry came to an end. It is a sad story, and one that I am rather glad that I have not to tell. None the less, in an attenuated form in the country and respectfully hidden under the substantial frock-coated figures of merchants and manufacturers in the new towns, the yeoman character of England survived, and it is still a factor to be reckoned in estimating the prejudices and policy of England. One of its chief attributes was a certain stubborn clinging to known facts and a distrust of anything unproved—a conservatism which is nearly always to be found in peasant folk. You are forced to respect facts if you are dependent for your daily bread on the hard realities of nature.

'Bite your bread and smell your cheese' was the cautious advice that Cobbett's farmer grandfather gave him—and I have noticed how often our English humour seems to turn on some unexpected collision between something rather grand and high falutin' and the hard sober impact of reality. I mean a pompous old gentleman slipping on an orange peel, or Jorrocks' huntsman Pig, rising from dinner to look out of the window and report the state of the night, and stepping straight into the larder cupboard whence he issued his astonishing weather report of 'Hellish black and smells of cheese'. And certainly what counts in England is always the logic of facts and events; never that of ideas. We are always appealing from the latter to the former—especially I may say in our law, where our rule is to be governed not by principles but by precedents. This is exactly what might be expected of a rustic people. I might add that our most popular statesmen have always been opportunists.

This stubborn adherence to fact has tended to make us very literal in our speech. Though in other matters not much distinguished by moral courage, the Englishman seldom flinches from speaking the truth when the alternative is to tell a literal



The Cattle Market

lie. We have always had a singular contempt for a liar in England—a contempt which many other peoples neither share nor even understand. We have also always tended to dislike exaggeration and overstatement. I recall one old Cheshire farmer who, sitting on the platform during the unveiling of a War Memorial in a village where the young men had been notoriously late in joining up, ruined the principal speaker's peroration by commenting in a matter-of-fact aside—'None of 'em went until 'a was pooshed'. But I am not certain that this yeoman hatred of falsehood and exaggeration is not diminishing in modern England: our popular Press is certainly increasingly free of it, and to read, say, the advertisements of the newest books in our more highbrow Sunday papers is a task so bewildering to a literal-minded man that I can only assume that literal-mindedness is dying out among our educated classes.

But the greatest of all the yeoman virtues is our love of independence. This splendid and civic quality—for such I am old-fashioned enough to believe it to be—we inherit without question from our yeoman fathers. And a hard, stubborn, liberty-loving lot they were. 'If you offer them work', complained an angry would-be employer of our eighteenth-century yeoman peasantry, 'they will tell you that they must go to look up their sheep, cut furzes, get their cow out of the pound or, perhaps, say they must take their horses to be shod that he may carry them to a horse race or a cricket match'. Very annoying for the would-be employer, no doubt, but then splendid for England. It was not the spirit of subservience that held the squares at Waterloo or manned the guns at Trafalgar, nor, I may add, held the salient at Ypres. And though today I know it seems to some as though the contending forces of joint stock capitalism and socialist bureaucracy had between them almost extinguished the last vestiges of English liberty, I do not believe that our yeoman passion for freedom can be killed so easily. For, you see, I don't think that our character is really changing very quickly—and I'm inclined to echo Disraeli's reply to the contemptuous opponent who asked him in the House, 'Where are the freemen of Bucks today?' 'Where you would expect to find them, of course, in the county of Buckinghamshire'.

But though that is still true, I believe, of the yeoman character, it is of course no longer true of the yeoman's holding.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed can never be supplied.

And, as I have said before, we mostly destroyed ours by the enclosures of the eighteenth century and the urbanisation of the nineteenth. And in the long run I believe that a nation, if it is to

remain strong and healthy, must have a prosperous and contented agriculture: otherwise, however rich its urban population may be, it is in the phrase of a great Venetian, like an eagle with one wing. And I should like to suggest that Groups, whether they live in town or in country, should discuss the truth or reverse of this belief of mine: and consider how far the agricultural life is necessary, not only economically but also spiritually, to the well-being and sanity of a nation. And then perhaps they might go on to discuss the even more vital question of whether it would be possible to re-create in England a landed yeomanry and peasantry, and the ways by which it might be done. It does look as though the older landed system of the country has almost broken down, and, on the principle that dawn is nearest when it is darkest, it may well be argued that there is a chance today to rebuild a strong rural England that has not existed for a hundred years.

Sentimentality is said to be an English failing—and perhaps you may feel that in my admiration for our rough old yeoman type I am falling heavily into that sin. And if to be proud of one's forefathers and to honour their homely virtues is sentimentality, I must plead guilty. As I talk, there passes across my mind a long line of English yeomen—my stalwart neighbour across the way whose cows so often keep me awake in the little Buckinghamshire village where I live; the sunburnt farmers of the Fenland who made such magnificent medieval knights in a pageant I once produced there; the Wiltshire farmer and erstwhile prize-fighter who taught me to box in his orchard when I was a lad. And then my eyes travel further—into books and into the past—and I see the yeomen cricketers of Hambledon playing on Broadhalfpenny, while the crowd around cries out in the broadest Hampshire 'Tich and turn, tich and turn', or watch Masefield's Robin Dawe galloping across the Berkshire meadows.

And to close all, I find myself seated with George Borrow in old Tom of Bedford's 'public' in Holborn way—Tom of Bedford, 'last and greatest of England's bruisers . . . sharp as winter, kind as spring' . . . There sits the yeoman at the end of his long room, surrounded by his friends. Glasses are filled, and a song is the cry, and a song is sung well suited to the place; it finds an echo in every heart—fists are clenched, arms are waved, and the portraits of the mighty fighting men of yore, Broughton and Slack and Ben, which adorn the walls, appear



The Yeoman at his ease

to smile grim approbation, whilst many a manly voice joins in the bold chorus:

Here's a health to old honest John Bull,
When he's gone we shan't find such another,
And with hearts and with glasses brim full
We will drink to old England, his mother.

The Norbury branch of the Croydon Public Libraries has organised foreign language circles for the purpose of holding conversation practice, making use of the broadcast language lessons. A wireless set has been lent by a local firm; and Spanish and German circles have been started, at which conversation will follow the reception of the broadcasts by Herr Kroemer and Señorita María de Laguna. This interesting experiment may stimulate other librarians to follow suit.



A Yorkshire farm, with the Howardean Hills in the background

Photograph: Will F. Taylor

*Rural Britain Today and Tomorrow—VI**East Yorkshire and the Fens: Women's Institutes*

By Professor J. A. SCOTT WATSON

After describing what he had seen in his journey south through Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, Professor Scott Watson discussed the work of the Women's Institutes with one of the members

IT happened that I had to be in Harrogate, in the latter half of September, to attend a conference of Wireless Group Leaders; and I took the opportunity, on my way south, of making a detour by way of the East Riding and Lincolnshire. This makes, I think, the best of all farmers' tours—at least if one is interested in arable farming. For one thing you see some of the richest land in England, perhaps in the world; and, what is more, a great deal of this is land that has been won, by our forefathers, out of a wilderness of floods. You see, too, what is perhaps even more interesting—other less good, even rather poor, land that is still, in spite of these difficult times, being kept at a wonderfully high pitch of productivity.

The Leeds district, where I made a start, does not in fact make a very promising beginning. Here, however, is the main centre of the great British rhubarb industry. I always feel glad that this noble (and I have no doubt very health-giving) plant should be able to flourish amid the smoke of industrial Yorkshire. I should hate to see it usurping land that might grow asparagus or strawberries or green peas, or many other things for which I personally have a higher regard.

Making east, for York, one soon leaves behind the dirty old coal measures and comes out upon the kindly mellow soil that lies upon the magnesian limestone. Have you ever thought what a happy dispensation it is that most of our coal lies underneath a poor soil? There are exceptions, of course; but on the whole the coal measure districts are among those that the farmer would most willingly have spared, if he had had a choice in the matter. And what a tragedy it would have been if coal had been found at Wisbech or Market Harborough or Evesham! A little beyond Tadcaster, on the still fertile new red sandstone, is the Yorkshire

County Council Farm at Askham Bryan. This is a new place, run by the Leeds University Agriculture Department, which is already establishing a reputation for very sound practical experimentation, particularly in connection with meat production.

This great Vale of York, where we now are, contains a deal of fine land and grows a big variety of crops. It is probably, after the Fens, our most important potato patch, though the proportion of potatoes to the hundred acres is not quite so great as in the Ormskirk country of Lancashire. In the south also, round Selby, where much of the soil is very sandy, there are great areas of carrots. Both these are very speculative crops: they say that potato growers don't need to back horses, because they get all the excitement they want out of the potato market. The sort of thing that can happen is that there is a glut, and potatoes are hardly worth selling; so you decide to hang on till spring, hoping that there may be a frost in Jersey or something—not, of course, that you wish the Jersey grower any harm—and the frost doesn't arrive. So you buy cattle to eat the potatoes; and then the beef market goes all wrong, and you find that you had far better have let the wretched potatoes rot in the pits. This, of course, is the kind of thing that the new potato marketing scheme is designed to prevent. The idea is that, when there is a surplus, each grower shall be required to withhold his due share from the market, and dispose of his own quota, on his own farm, as best he can.

In parts of the Vale of York floods are very troublesome. The cause of part of the trouble is the River Derwent, which, as you can see from the map, flows the wrong way—from the coast near Scarborough all along the Vale of Pickering into the heart of the county. The geologists tell us that the Derwent once, in fact, flowed the other way, but that the last ice age left

a great dam of boulder-clay across the mouth of its valley, about Filey; and so the river has had to run in reverse ever since. Climbing the escarpment of the chalk, here fully 800 feet above sea level, you leave behind the potatoes and carrots and flood meadows and come out upon a rolling open country of widely scattered homesteads and great square fields. You can read some of the history of this countryside in its face. Not so long ago it must have been very thinly inhabited and largely uncultivated; for the old villages are few and small, and the isolated farms are obviously fairly new. These great square fields cannot have been taken in piece-meal. The 'inning' must have been done on a bold scale and on a preconceived plan. And so indeed it was. Here was no gradual evolution, but a determined attack upon the virgin wold made at the time when the country was in dire need of bread.

Compared with many other parts of the country the wolds have changed, these last years, very little. Little land has gone down to grass. There are still enormous fields of straight drilled, cleanly cultivated swedes. It is still mostly four course farming—corn and roots, corn and clover. The old system in fact has been severely strained these last years, but nobody has yet found another to replace it. Mr. Strachan, the Agricultural Organiser, told me that two years ago a good many farmers were making plans to put down grass; but then, if you remember, there came a heavy slump in sheep prices, and the farmers decided—well, to stay in the frying pan.

I have seen something of the wolds in all but one of the past half-dozen summers; and each year, till this time, things have been getting worse. Last year one could have rented a good many thousand acres for next to no rent at all, and an old farmer told me he had never dreamed that so many first-rate men would ever be out of work. But this year there is quite a new spirit of confidence and hope. What with the wheat quota, and a better demand for barley and rather better prices for sheep, it would seem that many farmers will this year show a bit of profit, after a dismal succession of heavy losses. Moreover, the drought had not hit the crops, on this thin land, as hard as one would have expected. Corn, in fact, was turning out very well, and roots were still green and growing. Only, of course, in a summer such as this year's the water supply, on the chalk, is a continual trouble and anxiety. The whole area is nearly streamless, for the rain soaks down into the porous chalk for hundreds of feet, and in a long drought the ponds dry up, one after another, and the water carts have to cover many weary miles.

Round the Humber, and south along the Trent, is a stretch of what is called warp land—deep rich river silt that is neither light nor heavy—land that will grow anything and is almost too good for corn. Old Cobbett loved good land, and hated poor barren sands, like those of Bagshot, with a kind of personal hatred. About these warp soils he says, 'I declare that I have never seen any land to be compared with that on the banks of the Humber'. In another place, speaking of Lincolnshire as a whole, he puts the matter as well as it will ever be put: 'Everything taken together, here, in Lincolnshire, are more good things than man could have had the conscience to ask of God'.

Some of these warp lands are natural silts; others of them are artificial, having been built up, on top of originally poor land, by running on the turbid water of the estuaries and allowing the mud to settle. I could find none of this going on when I passed through in September, but twice before I have seen the business in progress. It takes perhaps a year and a half to lay down the fifteen or twenty inches of new soil; and it is an expensive business; but the land so made will carry immense crops, without manuring, for many years, and so long as the drains and sluices are maintained it is good land for all time.

I spent a night at the little town of Epworth, in the midst of the Isle of Axholme—an island of sandstone in what is now a sea of rich alluvium. A very interesting place, mostly in the hands of smallholders, and much of the land still in strips; though the old open-field custom has quite disappeared, and a man may do as he likes with his land. But the place is well described in Sir Daniel Hall's *Pilgrimage*, and I could find little or nothing to add to his story. There were a number of smallholders in the inn during the evening and their talk, of course, was all of farming; of how the sugar beet was giving the highest sugar-content ever known—one man had had a return from his factory that very day showing twenty-one per cent. And of what a godsend the sugar beet subsidy was, and did I think there was any chance that it would come to an end? And of how the hot weather in early summer had brought all their peas to market together so that they were nearly unsaleable—how a poor widow woman had sent a hundred bags to Manchester and got back a cheque for twelve-and-sixpence. And how glad they had been for yesterday's rain to fill their water butts, for this continual watercarting was a sad interruption to the work of potato and beet-

lifting. And had I seen many potato crops? And how were they turning out? Their own yields were so good that they feared a big glut and they would have been glad to hear that other crops were a bit more scanty—and so on.

It was a misty morning when I headed south for Lincoln, but in the afternoon as I ran along Lincoln Heath to Sleaford the sun shone again. Here is another country, not unlike the wolds in its landscape and in its history; poor land that has been turned into cornfields by the golden hoof of the big Lincoln sheep.



Lincolnshire farm labourers at work. A photograph taken in 1880

Paul Popper

The problem now is to find a way of growing the corn without the labour of sheep folding; it is as yet by no means certain that the way has been found.

And then down again, into the Fens—among fields of potatoes, sugar beet, celery, cabbage and many other laborious but valuable crops. The beet lifting was in full swing and Peterborough factory, when I passed it, was a remarkable sight. The mountains of beet had spread from the siding banks and seemed to cover every available corner of space; the sidings were full from end to end with loaded wagons, and there was a queue of lorries, stretching for a quarter of a mile along the road, waiting to discharge. It is hard to know what to think about this beet business. Of course if you sit down to argue the thing out by cold economic logic it is all slightly mad. We can buy white sugar in the world market today for 7s. a hundredweight, and here we are paying our own people a subsidy of 6s. 6d. a hundredweight to produce the same stuff. It is, I believe, the plain truth that other countries, with cheaper labour and sunnier climates, can produce beet sugar cheaper than we can; and again, I believe it is true that the cane growers can produce more cheaply than any beet growers anywhere in the world. So if we went by strictly business principles we should stop growing beet and let our factories fall to ruin. And yet, here are these Fen lands producing a ton-and-a-half of pure white sugar to the acre; keeping men at work; keeping land in a high state of fertility; and producing sugar at a cost which, after all, our grandfathers would have thought marvellously cheap; and then there are the memories of the War days, of the sugarless tea, and of not being able to produce a 'boily' for the kids. There is more in it, after all, than just buying in the cheapest market.

But we must now turn from farming to something else. Here is Mrs. Crowther, from Shropshire, who is going to tell us about Women's Institutes—how they began, and how they have grown.

MRS. H. L. CROWTHER: We began during the War, in 1915; and we have now more than five thousand Institutes with more than a quarter of a million members. Many things have



Barges taking some of Yorkshire's sugar beet crop down the River Ouse

Photograph; E. W. Tattersall

helped towards our success. The first is that we have always gone on the principle of making the Institutes appeal to *every* countrywoman. And we have tried to make sure that nobody need stay outside. It costs only two shillings a year to belong. Of course, we had very valuable support, in the early days, from the Agricultural Organisation Society—and then later from the Ministry of Agriculture. But it was a proud moment when we were able to say that we could carry on without help. We are, of course, very democratic. The squire's lady and the farmer's wife and the labourer's missus are all equal, and our work covers all kinds of things—from the everyday affairs of our own kitchens to problems of national importance. The problem of living in the country is not only a question of spending a certain money income in the most economical way. There is usually a garden, which can be a tremendous help if it is run in the right way, and if what it produces can be properly used. There may be an orchard, or at least a few fruit trees. There may be poultry or bees, which can be either a big asset or a liability. So the Institutes help in all these matters. The members club together to buy seed potatoes, fruit trees, bulbs, and other garden necessities. They get help and guidance about fruit bottling, jam making, preserving vegetables, as well as up-to-date country cooking. If you have ever seen one of our Food Produce Exhibitions you will realise how much all this can mean.

J. A. S. W.: I have, and I was very much impressed. Most men would be, I believe, by the sight of so much good food. But I have also been impressed, as much as a mere man can be, by shows of other things—baskets, door-mats, rugs, scarves, husbands' socks, and so on.

H. L. C.: We do a lot in that way too; and we are always trying to find ways of making use of the oddments of country produce—using homegrown withies or rushes; collecting sheep's wool from the hedges to make what we call 'eider down' quilts; finding a use, in fact, for whatever materials are nearest to hand. And then, of course, some of us get more ambitious. One Institute has a flourishing glove industry. Many others go in for quite fancy high-class leather work and so on. Countrywomen are becoming more and more efficient in every branch of hand-work.

J. A. S. W.: Some of these things, of course, are made for sale?

H. L. C.: Yes. And one of the bigger things we are trying to do at present is to organise the sale of members' produce and work. A lot of things are produced in the country, or can be produced, which are really worth a good deal of money, but which have been in the past very difficult to cash. So we are setting up a system of market stalls. Sometimes a stall is run by a County Federation, sometimes by a group of Institutes, and sometimes even by a single Institute. This is a very useful bit of co-operation. A member's hand-work will now, at the worst, bring in a useful little addition to her family income; and in some cases members are now making a living by their crafts. I should like to add one other remark about this—the members do not, of course, work all the time for themselves. Most Institutes from time to time collect a hamper of produce for the local hospital; and other charities benefit. Also, within this last month or so,

the County Federations have all been asked to provide craft-teachers for Unemployment Centres. I feel sure we shall be able to supply the need.

J. A. S. W.: Then of course you give a good deal of attention to the arts—play-acting, music, and dancing?

H. L. C.: Yes, all these and more—art needlework, for example. One Institute goes in for the making of the old traditional smocks. But the things you mentioned do in fact get most of our attention—drama especially. Each county has its drama festival, and the best of the county teams are picked out to go to the National Festival in London. Last May this festival filled the Scala Theatre to overflowing with an enthusiastic audience. And these festivals are producing writers of village plays. I saw, only a week or two ago, a really splendid presentation of a play called 'Breadman', by a village company. That had been written by one of our Shropshire schoolmasters from one of Mary Webb's novels. And then we are trying to keep up the old country arts which were in danger of dying out—folk dancing and the singing of good old English music. I believe we have had a lot to do with the recent revival of community singing which is doing so much to brighten our big gatherings of people. Of course, our choirs and drama circles are not confined to women. We often get the men and the boys to join in.

J. A. S. W.: Now let's turn to something else. I think the Institutes do discuss the bigger problems of the country, and do bring influences to bear.

H. L. C.: Yes. Of course, we are strictly non-political; but we do work for what we consider the good of the whole community as well as for what are specially women's concerns. We feel that our women's point of view should be represented, by women, on such bodies as Parish Councils; on the Health and the Education and the Housing Committees of the County Councils. I feel that we are gingering up our villages in many ways—pushing on electric light schemes, improving the safety of our road corners, pressing for the very necessary rubbish cart, getting in the telephone and so on. The biggest question at the moment is that of our village water supplies, which are in many cases quite inadequate. My own County Federation has just carried out a survey of the water supplies of the whole of rural Shropshire and we are putting all the information together. Again, some of our Institutes have built, or helped to build, their village halls, and have so contributed to the common good.

J. A. S. W.: It's a great record for eighteen years. I am sure the good work is helping to make the countryman's life a good deal pleasanter. It must, too, be making him a more efficient man; and by making him happier and more efficient it must be counterbalancing the attraction of the town.

H. L. C.: I believe so, certainly. Our motto is 'For Home and Country'. We are proud of what we have done and we are going on in our common effort for the all-round betterment of rural life. We are still getting bigger, and stronger. Our annual general meeting in London—the Women's Parliament, it has been called—has outgrown every hall in London except the Albert Hall, and it bids fair to overflow even that.

Fruit Trees for Small Gardens

By A. N. RAWES

AT the very mention of fruit trees, some people immediately conjure up a picture of cumbersome, rambling trees dotted about the garden—big trees, that starve the borders and shade the beds and generally swamp everything else. Misfit trees of this kind can be seen in a good many gardens, but they are not my idea of what is suitable. Big standard trees of apples and pears and plums can be extremely decorative and remarkably productive, but their place is tucked away at a corner of the lawn, for shade, or widely spaced out in the grass orchard. For the small garden, fruit trees should, I think, be of handy size and neat habit of growth: trees that will never grow big and out of hand, or overhang the boundary fence, and which will start cropping when quite small and young, say, at three years or so old. It is largely a matter of choosing the right varieties—getting trees propagated on the appropriate root stocks and with branches trained out in the right way. Your choice may be limited, to some extent, by the district you live in and by the space you have to fill: but there are very few gardens in which good fruit of one kind or other cannot be grown. Start right, with the right trees of suitable varieties, obtained from a reputable firm of fruit tree nurserymen, and you will experience very few difficulties; and it is certain the trees will add immeasurably to the general appearance of the garden and to the enjoyment and profit you get out of it.

Grow Apples and Pears as Espaliers and Cordons

I cannot go into great detail about selecting trees for planting, but I will run over some of the more important points which the prospective planter must watch. We can omit from our material the tall standard and half-standard trees, with long stems of anything from 4 ft. 6 ins. to 6 ft. before branching, and concentrate on essentially neat-growing and quick-fruited trees, which will take up very little room, cast practically no shade and yet fruit abundantly. I mean the horizontal espaliers, cordons, fan-shaped trees and very dwarf bushes. Take the espaliers first. You know what I mean by a horizontal espalier tree. It is trained quite flat, with four or five pairs of horizontal branches running straight out on either side of the centre stem: very trim and tidy looking and when full grown covering some 12 ft. or so lateral space. Apples and pears do wonderfully well as espalier trees. Couldn't you plant one or two of these against the garden fence; against the house side or garage wall; or why not a line of espalier trees down beside the garden pathway or as a background or edging for the lawn? A light trellis of three or four wires stretched between stout end-posts will provide the support required. You will find the trees distinctly ornamental and remarkably fruitful. Only a few weeks ago I saw an amateur gardener gathering more than 20 lbs. of perfect Cox's Orange Pippin apples from one espalier tree, and not a full grown tree at that. He had it growing against the house side and told me that only three summers ago that same wall space was covered with some unproductive 'creeper' of sorts. That is the kind of change-over you might make. These trees are not difficult to manage; but start with well built-up trees that have three or more tiers of horizontal branches already trained in and shaped by skilled nursery hands. It is the early shaping that some people find a little difficult; later management is practically rule-of-thumb treatment.

Then there are cordon trees, which are easier still to manage. These are ideal for the quite small garden, and would also fill odd corners and spaces in the large garden with profit. A cordon tree, of course, consists of a single straight stem: no branching is allowed at all, but the stem is furnished with short fruiting spurs right from top to bottom. You can get double and treble stem cordons, too, but, at any rate for the small garden, and eliminating all unnecessary 'fancy work', the single stem cordon is all that is wanted. Apples and pears do well as cordons; so do red and white currants and gooseberries. You can plant them in a straight line down the path-side, at the back of the lawn or border, against a fence or wall of any aspect, and some people grow them as a division between vegetable and flower beds. Wherever they are put, they make a good show and take up remarkably little room. The cordon apples and pears can be planted 2 ft. apart, the cordon gooseberries and currants only 12 ins. apart—so that a variety of choice fruits can be grown in quite a short narrow strip of ground.

I don't recommend growing plums and cherries—or any of the 'stone' fruits—as cordons, or as espaliers. To grow these in a small space, against a fence or wall or trellis, you had best train them in the form of fan-shaped trees, with eight or ten branches trained out flat. Peaches and nectarines, as well as plums and cherries, do well planted against a sunny, warm wall

in this fashion—peaches and nectarines must be in almost full sun. If, on the other hand, you have a north-facing wall still unclothed, you couldn't do better than plant a fan-shaped morello cherry tree there. These trees, like the others, are quite easily managed: they will yield finer fruits than the big and clumsy standards and tall bushes in the open, and you can fit them in where they will not interfere in the least with the flowers and shrubs and things. What I do emphasise, however, is that you should start with well-made trees from reliable nurserymen. For planting in the open garden you can now get the very dwarf and quick-cropping bushes of apples and pears. These are much more convenient in every way than the strong-growing spreading bushes that always seem to produce too much growth and too little fruit. But all trained fruit trees must be on suitable root stocks. You cannot convert any sort of apple tree into a neat-growing espalier, or order just so many plums and then convert them into fan-shaped trees—at least, not very successfully. You must let the nurseryman know just the sort of thing you want, and he will produce it, on the correct stock for the particular type of tree and variety.

A Wide Range of Selected Fruit Stocks

Just a word of explanation about this 'stock' question. You know, perhaps, that the root stock upon which the apple, pear, plum or cherry tree is grafted or budded in the nursery influences in a very marked manner the amount of growth the tree makes, the time the tree takes to come into bearing, cropping, and many other characters. Nowadays, owing largely to the experimental work at our Fruit Research Stations, fruit tree raisers have a wide range of selected root stocks of known performance and value to work with. There are stocks for most special purposes. For instance, when propagating apple trees to be grown as cordons, or for small trees in pots and for the very dwarf bushes, he would probably use the stock called the *Jaune de Metz Paradise*: for small bushes and espaliers and some cordons he would use the *Doucin Paradise* stock: for larger bushes he might employ the *Broadleaf English Paradise* stock, and for big standard trees he would use a selection of strong-growing crab stocks. Again, for pears he would use a special selection of dwarf-growing quince stock to make his espaliers, cordons and small bushes, and so on.

You may have heard the old saying that 'he who plants pears, plants for his heirs'—but that doesn't hold good nowadays—or it need not. In short, there is no need to have 'misfit' trees of any kind in the small garden nowadays. You can obtain a pamphlet prepared by the Fruit Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society, free on application to the Secretary, R.H.S., Vincent Square, London, S.W. 1, that will give you all the information you will want in regard to selection of varieties of trees suitable for garden planting.

Solitary Trees Mean Light Crops

It is always best to grow two or more varieties of apple, two or more pears or plums or cherries in the garden, so that one variety may cross-pollinate with the other. So many varieties of these 'top' fruits are self-sterile, or practically so, that to grow a solitary apple tree or solitary plum in the garden, or even several trees of one variety only, is risking light crops, or no fruit at all. With the 'soft' fruits, like gooseberries, currants, raspberries and such like, this pollination difficulty does not arise. I have said nothing about clothing the pergolas and fences with various berries, like the loganberry, the cultivated blackberries and so on, but you might do very much worse than scrap some of the unproductive and unprofitable climbers and grow fruit instead.

I have been asked to clear up a doubt that is, apparently, troubling some people regarding the fruit tree branches that overhang a neighbour's garden. The belief is cherished by some, it seems, that fruit on branches overhanging a boundary fence is the property of the person into whose garden it hangs. That, I believe, is not the correct view. The fruit belongs to the owner of the tree, even the fruit that has fallen to the ground, and not to the man whose garden the branches overhang, or on whose land the fruit falls. Anyway, if you take my advice and grow trees suitable for small gardens, this point need never arise, for there will be no sprawling, spreading branches to overhang the boundary wall. Finally, I suggest that you *have* room to plant fruit trees: there is no better time in all the year for planting than the present, and I hope you will make the most of your opportunity.

Economics in a Changing World—VI

By Commander STEPHEN KING-HALL

Palestine

PALESTINE HAS BEEN IN THE NEWS this last week, and though the problem of the Jew and the Arab presents itself to us chiefly as one of politics, it has its economic background. The Jewish community wants more land and more Jews. The Jewish agency, thanks to Jewish finance—in part charitable, in part investment—represents an industrious people who have been largely responsible for the fact that Palestine has prospered economically despite the depression. That in briefest outline is point number one. The Arabs, to put the matter crudely, want less Jews. The Arabs also want self-government. Finally, as a third point, there is the duty of the British Government as the Mandatory Power to keep law and order and to advance the economic and political well-being of the country in the interest of its inhabitants until such time as it can become an independent State. The Arabs are represented by the Arab Executive, many of whose members belong to the Pan-Arab organisation, which has a considerable influence in the Arab lands. It is one of the signs of the changing world that newspapers printed in Cairo can be delivered in Palestine in five hours, can go on to Baghdad at six next morning, be there at lunch-time and down at Basra at the head of the Persian Gulf the same evening. The air mail and the desert motor service link the Arab peoples together and some of these Arab peoples are self-governing. The conception of an Arab Empire in the Middle East is no vague dream. In Palestine the Jewish-Arab trouble comes to a head economically on two points—land and immigration. In brief, the Jew is in a position to buy at a good price the land he requires for intensive settlement and cultivation. Arab owners often in debt are tempted to sell, spend the proceeds and become landless and unemployed. The administration has had to control the sale of all land to Jews and requires Arab refusal of the land before it authorises sale. An additional complication is caused by the fact that the Arabs sometimes refuse land which appears to be unfertile, and is so, until Jewish money enables it to be irrigated, whereupon the rejected land flows with milk and honey. The Arabs do not want their land developed until they are ready to develop it themselves. The Jews maintain that they have brought great prosperity to Palestine, a prosperity from which the Arabs have benefited—as is proved, according to the Jews, by the fact that the Arab population has risen since 1922 from nearly six to nearly seven hundred thousand. What is needed, say the Jews, is more Jews, for whom there is ample room in Palestine, especially if the Huleh swamp in the north is drained and the Bethsheba plain in the south is irrigated. The Arabs maintain there is no more room for new immigrants. The Jewish population has increased from 65,300 in 1919 to 175,000 in 1931. Jewish immigration is controlled by the British High Commissioner, who grants permits to labourers in accordance with the economic needs of the country. Persons of independent means may enter freely. It has been estimated that between January and June of this year ten thousand persons entered the country, and in August the Palestine government issued one thousand certificates for German-Jewish refugees who were skilled workers.

Palestine is one of the few countries—perhaps the only country—in the world which can claim to have enjoyed a measure of prosperity even during the slump. The chief causes of this unusual state of affairs have been that there has been a steady inflow of new capital; that Palestine is not dependent on an extraordinary extent upon some staple product—such as coffee or rubber—whose price has fallen precipitately during the slump, and that there is a world demand for oranges and lemons and grape fruit. In Great Britain, for example, the consumption per head of fruit has risen about 40 per cent. since the two or three years before the War, and our consumption of oranges has nearly doubled. In Germany in the years just before the slump they were importing twice as many oranges and three times as many bananas as in 1912.

We must leave Palestine without touching on the economic possibilities of the potash business; the recently-opened harbour at Haifa which provides three hundred acres of sheltered water, and cost a million and a quarter; or the pipe line from Iraq, which will bring the oil from Persia to the coasts from which the Phœnicians trafficked and along which Alexander the Great marched after he had routed the Persian King at Issus close to the north-east corner of the Mediterranean Sea. From the very earliest times this Middle East area where Europe, Africa and Asia butt together has been of great political and economic significance in world history, and with the coming of the airways it looks as if, from the point of view of communications, it will be

one of the aerial Clapham Junctions of the world. If you draw a line on the map of the world through the centre of Canada, London, Sydney, Melbourne, and New Zealand, and then draw another one up the centre of Africa and round through India to the Malay States, you will have drawn the two geographical axes of the British Empire and you will find they cross in the area we have been discussing.

The Pig Scheme

NOW LET US TALK ABOUT THE PIG. You are probably aware that as part of the general scheme to encourage and reorganise British agriculture, a Pig Scheme was introduced. In essence, the scheme is as follows: an estimate is made of what our bacon consumption will be for a year and the figure arrived at was eleven million hundredweight. In order to find out how much of this can be supplied from home sources the Bacon Marketing Board invite tenders at a fixed price for the delivery of pigs to the bacon factories. On the basis of the 1930 Census of production it was believed that at a price of 12s. a score the British farmer would contract to supply pigs at the rate of about one and three-quarter million hundredweight a year. This would leave nine and a quarter million hundredweight to be imported, and after the Empire agreements at Ottawa had been honoured, the balance was to come from foreign sources. As part of a trade agreement signed six months ago between Denmark and this country, the Danes promised to take 80 per cent. of their coal from us and in return were promised that they might send us 62 per cent. of our foreign imports of bacon.

This scheme has been dislocated by the fact that when the contracts for the period November, 1933, to February, 1934, were examined it was discovered that the farmers in this country had contracted to supply pigs for bacon at the rate of some three million hundredweight a year. It seems possible that pigs have been promoted from the fate of producing pork to the higher destiny of producing bacon, but it is also clear that farmers have been concentrating on pigs. This means that the home industry has jumped straight into the position it was expected to reach by 1935. Whether such a rapid expansion may or may not lead to certain difficulties for the home trade remains to be seen, but it has certainly led to difficulties for the foreign bacon exporter, especially the Danes. The British Government, faced with this unexpected response by the home farmer, felt obliged to invite the exporting countries to cut down their supplies of bacon to this country. The country chiefly affected was Denmark, which for the years 1926-30 sent so much bacon and ham to this country that these products amounted to 31 per cent. of the total value of all Danish exports. Since 1930 the Danes have become even more dependent than before upon the United Kingdom market owing to restrictions imposed by Germany upon Danish agricultural produce. So keenly did the Danes feel the need of doing what they could to retain the British market that they did not see their way at the Conference in London a fortnight ago to agree to a voluntary cut. The British Government therefore announced that under the powers which it possesses in the Agricultural Marketing Act it would make an order reducing foreign supplies of bacon by 16 per cent. for the period of November 1, 1933, to February 28, 1934. Though the Danes will be chiefly affected, the Netherlands and Poland will also notice the effect of this order. In their case, however, bacon is not the key export which it is to Denmark. The arguments for and against this action may be stated as follows. From one point of view it is said: (1) that the British farmer must be given first claim on the home market; (2) that it is the policy of the British Government for national reasons to develop home agriculture; (3) that the action taken is necessary in order to stabilise prices, and that the Dane is better off if he gets a fair price for a smaller quantity than he would be if he sent more and there was a glut of bacon which would depress the price.

Another point of view would express itself somewhat as follows: (1) the cut in the Danish imports must mean that we shall, during the next four months, pay less to the Danes. The figure of two-and-a-half million pounds has been quoted in one of the financial dailies. This must mean that the Danes cannot buy our exports to the same extent as before; (2) the need of the world today is for a reduction of tariffs, quotas and other hindrances to trade, and as greater freedom of international trade is one of the declared objects of the British Government, it is not good business on our part to take action in the opposite direction.

It is your business to determine which set of arguments carries most weight.

*The Listener's Music**Composers' Commonsense—II*

THE tendency to regard certain of the great composers—notably Beethoven—as a kind of inspired idiot is due in part to Dryden's oft-quoted lines (misquoted; for he wrote 'wits' not 'genius', the former term not having been narrowed down to our modern signification):

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

Yet the best work of any great composer shows that the distinguishing quality of genius is a splendid sanity, an inspired commonsense. The quality is liable to be misunderstood, hence the popular definition of genius as 'an infinite capacity for taking pains'. But if painstaking be the criterion, many an industrious dullard will be enthroned.

For examples of inspired commonsense we need only go to the sketchbooks of Beethoven. I have already mentioned in these columns a recent work by Paul Mies, *Beethoven's Sketches* (Oxford University Press) which deals with the subject in a condensed way and with a copious use of the music type examples such a discussion demands. A short article can do little more than mention the sketchbooks, but space must be found for one easily-grasped instance of the side of genius that we are considering. I choose Beethoven's use of what is technically known as the anacrusis, a hard word which to a musician means a good deal concerning the method of starting a theme on the up-beat. Hum the tune of 'Rule, Britannia!' omitting the first note, and you have a tune beginning on the down-beat; add the first note, and you have the anacrusis. (The impatient reader who regards the term 'anacrusis' as mere professional jargon must be told that the term 'up-beat' is capable of several applications, whereas 'anacrusis' is specific.) There can be no question as to the life imparted to 'Rule, Britannia!' by that short first note.

Not every tune demands the anacrusis: many of the world's finest melodies are without it. The point is that Beethoven took astonishing pains as to when and how the device should be employed. *How*, as well as *when*, observe. The reader who will turn up the Rondo of the pianoforte sonata in E minor, Op. 90, will find a good example. In his first sketch of the Rondo theme, Beethoven began with the note G sharp repeated, the first note being a quaver on the up-beat. Here was the anacrusis, right enough: so much for the 'when'. But over and over again in the *Sketchbooks* Beethoven shows his dislike of repeated notes, and this is one of the instances, so he alters the first quaver G sharp to a pair of semiquavers, E and F sharp. Play the tune, first, without the opening quavers; second, with a quaver G sharp instead of the semiquavers E and F sharp; and, finally, as it now stands, and you will realise (1) the comparative tameness that sometimes results from the absence of the anacrusis; (2) the inadequacy of an anacrusis that merely anticipates (and probably weakens) the succeeding note on the down-beat; and (3) the gain when the anacrusis not only gives the required 'take-off' but also adds something to the melodic effect. We have here only one of many instances of Beethoven's care in regard to this detail. The Adagio of the 'Hammerklavier' Sonata (Op. 106) begins with two notes in octaves, A and C sharp. Originally the bar made up by these two notes was not present. Beethoven added it to the final proof, six months after he had finished the Sonata.

The story of composition is very largely a record of such attention to little things, due partly to intuition, but far more to commonsense that was both inspired and practical. Could we see the sketches of other composers we should find that Beethoven was not singular in this respect.

As with this matter of the anacrusis, so with a host of other details of construction, harmonisation, texture, scoring; there is, in fact, room for a book that might well prove to be the most instructive primer ever written on composition. It would deal exhaustively with those minute factors that determine whether a passage shall be a failure, a partial success, or a clinching triumph.

I had prepared a longish list of instances, but they cannot be adequately dealt with in the available space. An opportunity to resume the subject may occur in the future. I end by touching on a more general consideration. It is sometimes said that modern composers, in their increasingly exacting demands on technical and other resources, are less practical than the earlier of their predecessors. There is some foundation for the complaint, and the reasons are worth looking at.

First, the seventeenth and eighteenth century composers were almost invariably great instrumentalists as well. Often they gave the first performances of their own works; and, before music-printing and publishing became general, the playing of many important solo compositions was necessarily limited to the composer and a few of his pupils and friends. Bach, we know, wrote several of his most popular organ works for his own use during the brief tours he made from time to time; the existence of a few manuscript copies indicates that a limited circle of brother-performers shared his enjoyment of the exuberances of (say) the Toccata and Fugue in D minor. The point is that, so long as the tradition of composer-performer held, music was put to the severest of all practical tests: it might be difficult, but it had to be playable in a not ungrateful way; and it had also to 'come off' in performance.

A similar test was applied to ensemble music, both choral and orchestral. Bach composed his cantatas for performance by his own little choir and orchestra. Often they must have been written against time; we know from the records that his singers and players—especially the latter—were far from being first rate; and it is also pretty certain that rehearsals were inadequate. No composer had to cut his coat—or at any rate, so many coats—to suit his cloth, as Bach. Had his genius not been supplemented by a strong vein of commonsense, he would be no more than a mere name today.

Haydn is another outstanding instance of a composer who wrote largely for performance under his own direction. He knew to a hair what suited his orchestra at Esterhaz; he was able to experiment; and the limited character of his resources developed an astonishing fertility in device.

Another explanation of the strong practical bent of these early classics lies in the fact that (necessarily, for published studies were scarce or non-existent) they wrote most of the teaching material on which their pupils were trained. Bach plays a prominent part in musical education today because so much of his music was written for specific technical purposes; and, just as the non-teaching part of his output is marked by its practicability, so the educational part is almost invariably distinguished by musical value. Think of 'The Little Organ Book', one of the most intimate and poetical of all musical collections, written (as the title page announces) 'for the Beginning Organist . . . to perfect himself in the study of the Pedal'; of the Inventions, and the too-little-known Four Duetti that supplement them; of the Trio-Sonatas (truly described by Parry as being among the most perfect and delightful of his works) written for a two-manual harpsichord with pedals for the technical finishing of his son Wilhelm Friedeman; of the many charming little pieces in the book Bach put together for the use of his wife. The list could easily be lengthened: in fact, Bach's educational output in itself is a repertory of the highest artistic value.

With the development of publishing and concert-giving began the decline of the composer-performer, and today the exercise of the dual role is even somewhat of a handicap. A musician who has achieved fame as a performer will find it hard to convince the public that he is no less gifted as a composer. Ease of publication has also affected practicability by reversing the old order of things. Formerly, if a work achieved publication, it was only after thorough testing; today, publication comes first, and a composer of concerted music—especially for orchestra—is in the anomalous position of not knowing fully how a work sounds until it is printed and publicly performed, by which time it is too late to remedy miscalculations. This is one of the points usefully discussed by Mr. Hubert Foss in his very readable book *Music in My Time**, just issued.

Publication is a serious matter, but it is taken today too lightly only because there are so few other ways of reaching the public. . . . The inclination is never to test a work before it is judged. . . . Critically we expect of our composers what we should not expect in any other past period, and are none the less surprised because we think we find less than that.

The problem is, as Mr. Foss says, partly economic; and he puts forward suggestions that will be workable when we see a Mæcenas joining hands with the B.B.C. But it is only partly economic. There is even greater need for the quality with which great composers are so richly endowed. The solution will come when we apply to the organisation of the musical state the practical commonsense that we regard as a necessity in other departments of national life.

HARVEY GRACE

* Rich and Cowan, 6s.

English Music—VI

Our Contribution to European Music

By Dr. THOMAS ARMSTRONG

THE time has come to sum up what has been claimed for English music during these last six weeks, and to say what are the general characteristics of our contribution to European music. Let us admit at once that there are important branches of the art in which we have not excelled. We have not, on the whole, been prominent in the history of opera. We had no share, for one reason and another, in the late eighteenth-century movement which culminated in the symphonies of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. But we must avoid the mistake, so common in connection with English music, of belittling what we did produce in our admiration for what we did not produce. Dr. Vaughan Williams has well said of some of our critics that 'they were looking for flaunting hydrangeas and exotic mimosa, and finding none they declared there were no flowers to be seen, having failed to notice the modest violets and daisies that were hidden in the grass'.

What then may we claim to have done? First, from Dunstable till today there has been an unbroken tradition of fine word-setting. Our music has been particularly happy in its alliance with poetry. Our folk-songs, though highly personal, are equal in range and scope to those of any country: one or two of our song-writers stand in the first rank: our madrigal school was as able and varied in style as that of any country: our Tudor church music will bear comparison with that of Italy and the Netherlands. And our modern church music, since Purcell stabilised the form of the modern anthem, has provided a body of music small in size but often distinguished in style and workmanship. In other vocal forms, too, in part-song, cantata and oratorio, our composers, particularly during the last fifty years, have produced work that may rightly be called first-rate, and is none the less so for being sometimes in a style that foreigners do not fully understand at a first hearing.

In instrumental music we were pioneers: and Purcell's string music, with that of Corelli, holds a key position in chamber music history. Later chamber music was less distinguished; for in this field, naturally, the English society preference for foreign art had most influence. Even so, generalisation is dangerous, and a little wandering off the beaten track will often lead us to works whose neglect we find it hard to explain. And in recent years, with Elgar, Delius, Vaughan Williams, Bax, Ireland, Lambert, Walton and many others, our music is as much at home as that of any other nation in the symphony or chamber programme.

We may claim, too, to have given to the world many first-rate performers. In a previous talk I mentioned some who were widely famous in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Since then there have been many others, like Michael Kelly, John Field, Santley, Foley ('Signor Foli'), Fanny Davies, Borwick and Plunket Greene whose reputation has stood high outside their own country: and today we can claim no few conductors, singers and players whose names and talents are world famous. Our public is still sensitive, however, though perhaps less so, to the glamour of a foreign name: and in most branches of the art, as in that of solo organ-playing, it is sometimes galling to the English artist to find excessive and uncritical praise and publicity given to foreigners, while we have our own unnoticed players who are every bit as good musicians, though not perhaps such good showmen.

If you ask me what I consider the characteristics of our best music I reply sensitiveness and freshness, reticence and humanity. The first two qualities are qualities both of musical texture and of emotional outlook. Take one example of the first aspect, and compare a piece of Purcell's best choral writing, say the eight-part 'O Lord God of Hosts' with a typical piece of Bach eight-part motet music. You will find that in place of the solidity and weight of Bach there is a lighter feeling, and it is a difference not of skill in writing but of aim and outlook. Compare such a madrigal as Palestrina's 'I viagi fiori' with a typical English pastoral madrigal, and you will feel a marked freshness in the sound of the English work. It is a difference that goes deeper than mere technique, and is further illustrated if you compare the free, spontaneous, almost

improvisatory style of many English folk-songs with the stolidity of the German ones, the emotionalism of some Russian ones, or the formal and charming but somewhat restricted style of the French. We may note too the constant recurrence of a rather melancholy though not definitely sad mood in our music. This note sounds in much of our poetry and many of our hymns. It sounds in our music from Wilbye, through such works as 'Lord let me know mine end' (Greene), to the ever-present nostalgia of Delius.

By reticence I mean that English composers have not been temperamentally fitted to deal with some phases of more violent emotion. The crude passions of some Italian opera, and the naked emotionalism of Scriabin's 'Poème de l'Extase' have seemed faintly indecent to many English musicians who were not by any means incapable of understanding them. Good love songs have been written by our composers from Lutenist days to 'Hugh's song of the road', but no English composer, however greatly gifted he might be, would write a love poem like Wagner's 'Tristan and Isolde'. The same is true of death. We have not been without men capable of dealing with it: (remember 'When I am laid in earth'); but I think a great English composer would have avoided the morbidity that has been felt in some of Bach's cantatas or the sensationalism of Strauss' 'Death and Transfiguration'. And here humanity comes in. Would an English genius as richly gifted as Wagner have written Siegfried's Funeral March? However much we may admire its pomp and power as it stands in Wagner's great scheme, it has surely an element of brutality that an Englishman would avoid. Our best composers have seemed to dwell more upon the homely though not less real emotions of ordinary people. Our musical Romeo and Juliet is 'A Village Romeo and Juliet': and even in our religious music we have kept close to what Keble called 'the sober standard of feeling in matters of ordinary religion'. Byrd, a convinced Roman Catholic, wrote indiscriminately for the Roman Mass or the English reformed service. And between the most spiritual music of Byrd, like his 'Ave Verum' and such a work as Vittoria's 'Jesu dulcis memoria' there is a significant difference of mentality, not entirely individual, but national. Byrd's music remains personal. The Vittoria has a fierce impersonal absorption in its own meditation: its gentle sounds are full of the spirit that produced the Inquisition. I have always thought there was something significant in the Englishman's love of Handel. Handel was not an Englishman except by naturalisation, but he chose to live here when the whole of Europe was at his disposal, although he was twice bankrupted during his London life; and his music seems to me the sort of music that many Englishmen would choose to write. It has qualities that we admire: it is powerful, tender, open-eyed and wise.

But there is another side to our musical life, and a very important one. Far from the London concert hall, in village institute and in country house, you will find people meeting week after week to work at string quartet, or madrigal or cantata. They are preparing for the village concert, or next year's festival. Their efforts are often far from polished, and form an easy butt for the humour of the variety entertainer. But they are an important part of our musical life, which depends for its vitality to no small extent upon their efforts. In schools up and down the land, too, you will find a growing interest in music and a growing desire to have an active part in it, and this is a most hopeful thing. I have just read in the *Manchester Guardian* about the glories of Children's Day at the Blackpool Festival: I remember the lovely singing of some of the Winnipeg school choirs: I remember an exquisite piece of singing by some tiny children at the Falmouth Festival: and anybody who has experience of well-directed festivals will know how wide is their musical influence. Donald Tovey has quoted the case of a Bach Cantata, sung as a test piece by small town choirs in an English Festival a fortnight before its full-dress public performance as a novelty in Berlin: and I can assure you that the musical standards of many a festival today are extremely high.

But there is still a long way to go. You would be surprised to know how many country schools there still are that have no musical instrument of any kind: you would be surprised to know how often members of local education authorities regard music as a luxury subject on which it is extravagant to spend a penny. There never was a greater mistake. If we want to make English music a force in the world we must first make it a force in the lives of ordinary men and women. A country gets the composers it deserves. Geniuses don't drop from heaven: they are the natural result of generations of effort. A community that sincerely loves and practises music will ultimately produce a genius. When another very great composer appears let us hope he may be an Englishman, and let us hope he will have a chance, even if he happens to be born of poor parents

in a remote village. Bach's father was a country-organist: Haydn's was a village wheelwright; Brahms' grandfather kept an inn, Verdi's father the village shop: and so one might go on. It is not fanciful to say that at this moment some boy who has genius may be singing evensong in a cathedral choir or singing hymns in a village Sunday school: whether he is able to develop his gifts or not will depend largely on the music of his environment; and this depends to no small extent upon you and me and our attitude to music.

In finishing this series of talks I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Ernest Walker's *History of Music in England* published by the Oxford University Press. Dr. Walker has done much for our music as composer, teacher and writer, and his book is invaluable to the student of English music.

Science Speeds Up Communications

(Continued from page 732)

In the early days the wireless only represented a new way of doing an old thing—sending urgent messages very quickly for long distances. But in its later development, it is doing something really new—bringing to the multitude the actual living voice of statesman and singer, teacher and preacher, instead of mere printed accounts; allowing you to sit at home and enjoy concerts and entertainments which are taking place tens or hundreds of miles away.

But before pursuing this line of thought, let me go back to photo-electricity. This is the study of the electrical changes which go on in certain substances when light falls on them. The rare metal called selenium is the substance which shows these changes most strikingly: if light falls upon it, it changes its electrical resistance. The photo-electric properties of selenium have a great many modern applications. From our present angle, they are important as being the basis of television. Most systems of television depend on the translation, by means of selenium, of the different intensities of black and white in different parts of a picture, into different intensities of electric current; and then, at the other end of the process, of the retranslation of these, again with the aid of selenium, into light.

The other great contribution of science to television is the cathode ray oscillograph, which grew directly out of the researches of pure physicists on the curious things that happened when electric currents were passed through tubes containing highly rarefied gas. It looks as if the recent application of this instrument to the television problem is destined soon to bring about a radical improvement in efficiency and practicability. It really is on the cards now that sometime in the future television will become as practicable as radio, though it is never likely to be as cheap. Then, when people in their own houses can both see and hear what is going on in the world, sitting at home will really begin to be quite a rival to rushing around. And when the films are coloured and stereoscopic as well as talkies, and perhaps have smell thrown in too, at least you will have less temptation to travel instead of going just as far as the nearest cinema house. So there are, rather surprisingly, these two opposing tendencies of progress in communications, one tending to the increase of wandering, the other to the quiet evening at home.

There are, however, other aspects of the matter than this merely physical one. Communications can unify the minds of people as well as transport their bodies. The United States, for instance, could not have a real national life but for the telegraph and other methods for the speedy transmission of news and ideas. Here again, modern applications of science are leading to wholly new developments. If we want to take a peep into the future, we may, I think, regard it as pretty certain that a hundred

years hence, telephony and television will be so perfected that if a statesman is prevented from coming from Washington or Pekin to Geneva or whatever will then be the seat of the successor to our present League of Nations, he will be able to take part in the discussions almost as if he were in the room, both heard and seen by his colleagues on the Committee, and able

himself to hear and see their reactions to his words. This will clearly simplify the problems of world government a great deal. Then the telegraph and long distance telephone have already wholly transformed the relation between generals and ambassadors to the authorities at home. Until after the middle of last century the man on the spot had to show initiative and take responsibility in the same way as a Cabinet Minister at home. Today he is at the end of a wire and must all the time be taking either orders or advice.

Broadcasting has given statesmen enormous new powers. Look at the influence exerted through this channel in the last few months by Roosevelt and by Hitler. Broadcasting and the cinema have also brought new possibilities of propaganda, both in its bad and its good sense, and of education. The new vistas opened up in the vast areas of the globe still occupied mainly by people who cannot read is enormous—possibilities of intelligent co-operation with government, of improved agriculture, of better health, of recreation and culture.

But although improved communications can link people together, they can also be employed to keep them apart. It is common knowledge that in certain parts of Europe nationally controlled broadcasting systems are being used for nationalist propaganda purposes. More and more powerful stations are being erected, to ensure the penetration of this propaganda to greater distances, or even to swamp or interfere with the broadcasts of neighbour nations.

Language is another example, so familiar that we are apt to forget about it. It is essentially an instrument of communication. But it can also become a badge of difference, and today with the spread of nationalist feeling, languages are becoming more and more organs of nationalism. To counteract

this, we want a scientific study of the best means of getting world communication by means of an international language, auxiliary to the national languages already in existence. So here, too, as in all the other fields I have discussed, the applications of science become entangled with politics and economics, both affecting them and being affected by them. The logic of improved transport and communications is a world-state; the fact of the existing world is its organisation into competing sovereign national states. The logic and the fact are in violent conflict, and there the scientist must perforce leave the problem.

BASIC ENGLISH (MNEMONIC)

OPERATORS ETC.	NECESSARY NAMES	COMMON THINGS	QUALIFIERS
POINT	ACT	LOOK	AMPLE
SET	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
DEEP	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
LEFT	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
RIGHT	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
DOWN	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
UP	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
FORWARD	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
BACKWARD	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE LEFT	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE RIGHT	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE FRONT	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE REAR	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE TOP	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE BOTTOM	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE CENTER	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE PERIPHERY	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE MIDDLE	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE EDGE	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE CORNER	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
TO THE JUNCTION	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
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TO THE CONJUNCTION	ADJUSTMENT	NAME	ARM
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Points from Letters

Owing to the pressure upon its space, THE LISTENER is able to publish only a selection from the correspondence which it receives. Correspondents are asked to write briefly and to the point, and are reminded that name and address must always be given, even where their publication is not desired. THE LISTENER, of course, undertakes no responsibility for the views expressed in these columns

The English Parson

Last week Mr. Bryant painted a pretty picture of the 'parson'. According to him, the type most liked in England is a man who is not too clever; who minds his belly; who takes a healthy red-faced delight in the world about him; who is fond of fighting; who keeps no Lent; who is not much better than his parishioners. Mr. Bryant then adduces George Herbert as an example of the best kind of parson; and surely here he definitely misleads his readers. For what has Herbert at all in common with the Parson Adams type in which Mr. Bryant revels? He is not the best example of that type of parson, as would appear from Mr. Bryant's talk; he is a different type altogether. What is the picture of him in that very *Life* by Izaak Walton in which appears Herbert's injunction to his wife, quoted by Mr. Bryant? Here is no reference to food, to fighting; here is no impression that the parson was not too clever, and not too ascetic. There is instead much talk of fasting and prayers, of the need for a more religious clergy, of the strict observance of ember days, of the clergy refraining from surfeiting, of Herbert's diligence to make his parishioners understand what they prayed, of his constant public prayer and the services twice a day in the parsonage-house chapel to which he 'brought most of his parishioners and many gentlemen in the neighbourhood'. And what does Herbert himself say of the parson's life? 'The country parson is exceeding exact in his life, being holy, just, prudent, temperate, bold, grave, in all his ways. . . . Because luxury is a very visible sin, the parson is very careful to avoid all the kinds thereof; but especially that of drinking'. He studies to acquire 'patience in regard of afflictions, mortification in regard of lusts and affections'. Where Mr. Bryant was at fault, I maintain, was in not making clear the enormous gulf separating the Herbert type and the Parson Adams type; and in not pointing out that whereas the condition of spiritual sloth into which the Church of England fell in the eighteenth century is largely attributable to the Adams type of parson, every spiritual movement in that Church has been due to such holy and world-denying characters as George Herbert.

London, W. 11

ADAM WRIGHT

[Editorial comment on the above will be found on page 737]

National Attitude to War

May I comment on the talk on 'The Parson' in the 'National Character' series reprinted by you on November 8? The writer describes as a prominent English virtue the 'rough and fighting good humour' of the English people, and the lack of malice towards a war enemy, and he refers to the late war and peace as having for these reasons been conducted in a not 'entirely English way'. May it be said that a view of this sort tends to cast reflection on our French ex-allies (since it is no doubt they who have 'sat on [Germany's] head lest [it] should get up again'), and to disregard the very obvious influence of natural and geographical conditions on a nation's attitude towards war? The fine detachment of the Englishman's attitude may conceivably be due to his immunity, during four years, from a war waged on the national territory with all the refinements of ferocity and danger for which modern warfare or German customs could account. Since the War, France and Versailles have become very nearly identical in the clouded popular mind of Germany, and attacks on the latter are still not sufficiently rare for us to look on French security as an assured conclusion. In these circumstances, may we not regard English indifference as due to want of thought more even than to high-mindedness, and French anxiety as due to geographical conditions that are not likely soon to cease—just as we may regard the possession of two fronts as contributing in no small degree to the erratic, unconfident and violent psychology of the otherwise great German nation?

Balliol College, Oxford

P. S. FALLA

Art Education in Schools

Mr. Noel Carrington, in a letter printed in the issue of THE LISTENER for November 1, observed that in our schools 'where a vague respect for Art is inculcated, there is seldom any real sense of what design means'. Lord Crawford, in his recent presidential address to the C.P.R.E. Annual Conference at Buxton, emphasised the need of teaching in schools regarding design and the countryside. The need is indeed urgent to educate the young in this matter of design. If such teaching could be begun systematically, its results ought ultimately to lessen legislation such as we have in the Town and Country Planning Acts. (This is an optimistic view. I fear that most of the damage will have been

done before we achieve the results we desire—unless every jot and tittle of the Planning Act of 1932 is observed by local authorities up and down the country.)

It is satisfactory to note that the C.P.R.E. is about to appoint a committee to go into this matter of education and the preservation of the countryside, but an extended scheme might be envisaged which would embrace the whole question of Design in Life. As an art master, I realise that effective art teaching in school cannot be complete unless it tackles this question of the relationship between art and life outside the school walls. And by art, I simply mean design in its broadest sense. I have tried to meet this need by devising, for my own secondary school, an appreciation course called 'Design in Life'. This title I have frankly borrowed from the title of the series of B.B.C. talks on 'Design in Modern Life'. The booklet which was issued in connection with these talks, together with Mr. Barton's booklet on *Modern Art*, I use as the class text-books for information, reference, discussion and illustration. My field of survey is that covered by these booklets, and I have added a section on tools and machines. Each boy is making a picture-book comprised of photographs, etc., mostly drawn from newspapers and periodicals, and these are arranged in the comparative method of good and bad designs. The course will occupy one year, and as it began this last September it is premature to predict its results. I can as yet only foresee its possibilities. As a second and even third year course, I have planned individual work more in the nature of a thesis, on country crafts, the evolution of agricultural implements and machines (including the windmill), an illustrated book of local horrors (architectural, etc.), village surveys, etc.

Already the course is being taken up with enthusiasm, and I am constantly, in class discussion, discovering that the taste of the boys, whose ages range from 13-18, is instinctively sound and only needs guidance. This was apparent when my boys entered the B.B.C. questionnaire on the matter of artistic taste. Their choices and judgments were spontaneously right between the ages of 11-14. There was a falling off between the ages of 14-16 (the age of dawning sophistication), and an appearance of more mature choice and judgment between the ages of 16-18.

Children start, then, with an instinctive bias towards right design (especially modern design. Having taken machines, aeroplanes and motor-cars for granted, they expect to see all modern, urban design harmonise). We have good seed in our children. The fate of the harvest lies with education.

Tonbridge

A. PERCY FRIEND

Reviving Craftsmanship?

Some of the statements in the interesting leading article of THE LISTENER of November 1 invite criticism. The suggestion that craftsmanship is not a commercial proposition, for instance, is surely misleading. In spite of bungaloid growths, there are now, as there were not in Victorian times, many thousands of bricklayers, plasterers and carpenters in the building industry who deserve the name of craftsmen simply because they are using good materials intelligently, though often, of course, their work would be better than it is if it were designed and supervised by competent architects. An architect who knows his business can still build houses by traditional methods that may be let at an economic rent to any but the poorest class of tenant. That in the future enforced leisure will foster unprofessional craftsmanship is doubtless true, but the housing problem is not one that can be solved by men working in their spare time for fun; and Morris probably knew what he was talking about when he told a Victorian audience that 'unless you are resolved to have a good and rational architecture it is useless your thinking about art at all'.

Ashford

P. A. RICE

Vanishing England

After Mr. Howard Marshall's talk on 'The Lake District', I feel compelled to take up the cudgels on behalf of Thirlmere. This reservoir—or lake, as it is better known—is, to my mind, an extremely good example of the way in which a district can be developed without in any way destroying its amenities. I have no recollection of what Thirlmere was like before it became a reservoir—I do not know whether Mr. Marshall has—but I venture to suggest that actually its natural beauty has been increased. The environs of the lake have been planted with firs and pines, which slope down to the very edge of the water, and through them, from the roads on both sides, charming glimpses of the lake can be seen. The road from Grasmere to Keswick is not very picturesque, even with this 'artificial' lake and woods, but it must have been far worse before they were there.

As regards the general question of 'Vanishing England', I agree that action must be taken to prevent the desecration of the countryside, and that the main hope of preservation is a matter of education. But we must, above all, be practical. Mr. Marshall's forecast of what Haweswater will be like—a reservoir with the fells coming down sheer into it and a motor road running along the east side—may be right, but, on the other hand, it is quite probably wrong. Reservoirs, garages, houses, roads—they are all necessities, and it is no use crying out against them. We cannot stop the march of progress. But we can stop progress advancing juggernaut-like and destroying the natural charms of the countryside. We can guide progress into the proper paths.

Manchester

CHARLES W. GRADWELL

The Loch Ness Monster

I understand that much ink has been spilt on the latest Loch Ness apparition. But perhaps one more contribution, and that an important one, remains to be made. Saint Columba (Colum Cille) was founder of the famous monastery of Iona and was its first Abbot from 563 to his death in 597. His life was written about the year 690 by Adamnan, another Abbot of Iona. Adamnan's *Life* is known to every student of hagiology. In the twenty-seventh chapter of the Second Book of that work Adamnan wrote as follows (translating from the Latin):

At another time when the blessed man was staying for some days in the province of the Picts he was obliged to cross the river Ness, and when he had come to the bank he saw some of the inhabitants burying an unfortunate fellow whom, as those who were burying him related, a little while before some aquatic monster seized and savagely bit while he was swimming, and whose hapless body some men coming up, though too late, in a boat rescued by means of hooks which they threw out. The blessed man hearing these things ordered one of his companions to swim out and bring him from over the water a coble that was beached on the other bank. And hearing and obeying the command of the illustrious man Lugne Mocu Min without delay took off his clothes except his tunic and cast himself into the water. But the monster which was lying in the river bed and whose appetite was rather whetted for more prey than sated with what it already had, perceiving the surface of the water disturbed by the swimmer suddenly came up and moved towards the man as he swam in mid stream and with a great roar rushed on him with open mouth while all who were there, barbarians as well as Brethren, were terror-struck. The blessed man seeing it, after making the Salutary Sign of the Cross in the empty air with his holy hand upraised and invoking the Name of God, commanded the ferocious monster saying: Go thou no further nor touch the man; go back at once. Then on hearing the word of the saint the monster was terrified and went away more quickly than if he had been dragged off by ropes, though it had approached Lugne as he swam so closely that between the man and the monster there was no more than the length of a punt pole. Then the Brethren, greatly marvelling, seeing the monster had gone back and that their comrade Lugne returned to them untouched and unharmed, glorified God in the blessed man.

As this was thirteen and a half centuries ago, the latest apparition may be said to have had a respectable lineage. Perhaps it is not too much to hope that this 'fresh light' may inspire the zoologists and folk-lorists to further efforts.

Richmond

J. K. O'KEEFE

Literally True?

Sir Evelyn Wrench states (on page 715 of your last issue): 'It was in Westminster Abbey. I was listening to the organ. Suddenly the scales fell from my eyes; I was literally re-born'. If this is a true statement, it is odd no wider notice should have been taken of this unique phenomenon. So far as I know, no religious sect, however strict, has postulated literal rebirth as a necessity of conversion. If this is not a true statement, I can only grieve that a journalist of so long experience as Sir Evelyn Wrench should associate himself with the climber who had literally to cling on with his eyebrows, the athlete who literally flew round the track, the 30,000 Unionists of Southern Ireland who were literally thrown to the wolves when the Home Rule Bill was passed, and the other remarkable persons whose exaggerations the *Dictionary of Modern English Usage* so effectively exposes.

Leeds

R. BUTLER

Compensation to Slum Owners

'The bedrock principle as to compensation is quite clear, that one is no more entitled to offer houses too bad for occupation than food too bad to eat', says Sir E. Hilton Young, the Minister for Health. He thus seeks to justify, by a totally false analogy, the Housing Act of 1930, which does not permit any compensation to owners of dwelling houses that happen to be condemned as slums by the government or municipal officials reporting on them. The falsity of Sir Hilton's analogy is immediately seen when we remember that the man who offers 'food too bad to eat' is breaking the laws of the land, and incurs the appropriate punishment. I have yet to learn that a man can be fined or imprisoned for offering houses which Sir Hilton and his bureaucrats may think are 'slums' but which crowds of competent judges may refuse to class thus. The truth is, that as pro-

gress increases we begin to regard as 'slums' houses which a generation or two ago would have been thought quite fair and decent. Slum abolition is the price we pay for our progress, and that price should be paid by the whole community—not merely by the small section who happen to be owners of the houses at the time they are condemned as slums. It should be remembered that when England outgrew slavery she liberated the slaves but compensated the slave-owners. Also, when she decided to reduce licences for the sale of intoxicants, she made provision for payment of adequate compensation to the dispossessed licensees. Yet, under this Housing Act of 1930, no provision for compensation is made, and we read of such cases as that of the poor old fellow who committed suicide because of the confiscation and demolition of the houses in which he had invested all his life's savings—£600. Reference to many similar cases was made at a meeting of the Coventry City Council on September 26. 'Regret was expressed that the Act did not empower local authorities to make any compensation except in the case of business premises. . . . Many owners were poor people with no other income'. (*The Times*, September 27).

Woodford

GEORGE EASTGATE

School Journeys

I have had sent me an extract from the issue of *THE LISTENER* of October 25, in which a writer deprecates the emphasis laid upon the international value of school journeys and urges that the educational function of the school journey has not been exploited to the full. At the Mansion House each speaker referred to the educational value of the school journey as being so obvious a consideration that it was unnecessary to stress it, and consequently their references to the international side of our activities was perhaps over-emphasised in the speeches. In point of practice, however, the first and last consideration in the teacher's mind is the educational value of this method of instruction, whilst speakers at our various conferences have most certainly stressed this aspect of our work beyond any other.

In 1931 over 50,000 scholars enjoyed a school journey within the borders of our own land, whilst a further 10,000 boys and girls travelled to different parts of the Continent. It is safe to assume that the teachers in charge of the parties would take every possible advantage of the opportunities afforded geographically, historically, archaeologically and otherwise for storing up knowledge and experience to serve as a background for the reading and for lectures which are the normal vehicle in instruction in the schools after their return.

H. W. BARTER

Hon. General Secretary,
School Journey Association

Croydon

Books for the Unemployed

As Chairman of the Committee responsible for the scheme for the distribution of books to unemployment centres, may I express my thanks for the support which the British Broadcasting Corporation, and also Mr. Desmond MacCarthy and Mr. G. K. Chesterton, have given in the broadcasting of our appeal? May I further say how grateful we are to *THE LISTENER* for the helpful publicity given in its columns, and to your readers for the generous response which they have already made to it? The full particulars published in *THE LISTENER* of November 1 make it unnecessary for me to enter into the details of the scheme, or to emphasise the merits of the appeal; but I would express the hope that those who are in a position to give books will send them to the central depot at 11 Hanway Place, Tottenham Court Road, W.C. 1, or to the provincial Y.M.C.A. centres as soon as they conveniently can.

Albury

EUSTACE PERCY

'Draft of XXX Cantos'

Mr. Gibson, in a letter in your issue of November 1, in my opinion completely misinterprets the relation between the poet and reader. The reader is a privileged spectator of the process of the poet exteriorising himself; differing from the spectator, however, in one way, in that he can jump on to the stage and join in if he wants to badly enough. But the poem is not written for the reader, but only becomes his property if he will take the trouble to appropriate it to himself. It demands active co-operation, as Mr. Davies has stated in his articles.

Hence if Mr. Gibson wants Pound's *XXX Cantos* as his own property he must make use of his own receptive poetic genius—which the reviewer in question assumes every reader to have. He must educate, stimulate, sensitise his being into as far as possible the same state as Mr. Pound's when he was giving birth to the poem. In the case of the *Cantos* this necessitates considerable scholarship as well as poetic receptivity, and here I believe the reviewer feels his shortcomings—as I do. But neither he nor I, I am sure, condemn Pound because of our own limitations; and until our minds have grasped and appropriated the poem we must not doubt that these are 'emotions worthy to make poetry of'.

Caterham

MAURICE CARPENTER

Short Story

Gehenna

By CONRAD AIKEN

HOW easily—reflected Smith, or Jones, or Robinson, or whatever his name happened to be—our little world can go to pieces! And incidentally, of course, the great world; for the great world is only ourselves writ large, is at best nothing but a projection of our own thought, and of our own order or disorder in thought. It was a moment's presumption that led a genius to write that genius and madness are near allied; proximity to madness is not a privilege of genius alone; it is the privilege and natural necessity of every consciousness, from the highest to the lowest; Smith and Robinson are as precariously hung in the void as Shakespeare himself. Do we not know that even the animals go mad? Have we not been informed that an ant, afflicted with a tumour of the brain, will walk in circles, bite his neighbours, and in every sense behave abnormally? His internal order, or habit, has been changed; and *ipso facto*, the external order has been destroyed. By that little speck of accidental matter, unforeseeable, gods (perhaps) have been deposed, stars dislodged from their orbits, moons turned into alarm-clocks. The fair page of the world, thus re-set, becomes a brilliant but meaningless jumble of typographical errors.

And thus—thought Smith, or Jones, or Robinson—it is with me. At this very moment some little atom may have taken, in some tiny cross-road of my brain, the wrong turning. Some infinitesimal dead leaf may have lodged itself, in my thought's stream, against some infinitesimal twig; and the consequences may prove incalculable. On that dead leaf of matter or feeling or thought will depend the whole course of my life. In an instant it will be as if I had stepped through this bright cobweb of appearance on which I walk with such apparent security, and plunged into a chaos of my own; for that chaos will be as intimately and recognisably my own, with its Smith-like disorder, as the present world is my own, with its Smith-like order. Here will be all the appurtenances of my life, every like and dislike, every longing or revulsion, from the smallest to the greatest; all the umbrellas—so to speak—of my life, all the cancelled postage-stamps and burnt matches, the clipped finger-nails, love-letters, calendars and sunrises; but all of them interchanged and become (by change) endowed with demonic power. At a step, I shall have fallen into a profound and perhaps termless Gehenna which will be everywhere nothing but Smith. Only to the name of Smith will the umbrella-winged demons of this chaos answer.

It is now—thought Smith, or Jones, or Robinson—past midnight, and this apartment house, with all its curious occupants, is asleep. The janitor has locked the outer door; the row of mother-of-pearl electric buttons (one for each occupant) is inert, for lack of inquiring fingers to complete their respective circuits; the brass letter-boxes yawn darkly for the absent postman; the elevator has settled down for the night on the fourth floor, to which it was brought by a late-comer at twelve-forty-three. Even the water in the innumerable pipes has gone to sleep, become stale and torpid. And here, in my room, I pace to and fro, thinking how easily I could change all this. Perhaps I would achieve this gradually, and step by step, just as I pace to and fro across the four rugs from Persia which cover the floor; item by item I would tear down the majestic fiction which is at present myself and the world, and item by item build up another. Exactly as one can stare at a word until it becomes meaningless, I can begin to stare at the world. What in heaven's name are these rugs? What in heaven's name are these walls, this floor, the books on my mantelpiece, the three worn wooden chairs, the pencils in a row on my red table? Arrangements of atoms? If so, then they are all perpetually in motion; the whole appearance is in reality a chaotic flux, a whirlwind of opposing forces; they and I are in one preposterous stream together, borne helplessly to an unknown destiny. I am myself perhaps only a momentary sparkle on the swift surface of this preposterous stream. My awareness is only an accident; and moreover my awareness is less truly myself than this stream which supports me, and out of which my sparkle of consciousness has for a moment been cast up. And how easy—once more—to slip back into the flux itself, into that deeper current, that primordial chaos, which is really I! My own Gehenna, now as always,

awaits me there within, with all its horrors and all its magnificence.

Pausing at the window and looking forth at the row of snow-laden roofs opposite, above which hang the stars, I light one cigarette from another, and wave away the smoke with my hand. Let me also, with a mental gesture of waving (and what is thought but a gesture?) wave away this apartment house. At the mere notion, it has already begun to lose something of its reality. Was the North Star hung at the world's masthead only in order that on a certain day in a certain year an ugly wallpaper should be glued to the walls of this room? Is evolution only an evolution from the sublime to the ridiculous? This curious structure of bricks and wood, with its guts of lead and its nerves of copper, with its horizontal tiers of little caves, its stairs, its elevator, and the metal heart which sends warmth everywhere through metal arteries—why should it be as it is? Instantly it becomes a horror. And its occupants, these other Smiths and Robinsons, lying asleep in dark little holes, with their hands hanging over the bed's edge, their eyes shut and their mouths open; or solemnly divesting themselves of their detachable skins, winding their watches, brushing their teeth, turning the handglass this way and that to see if their hair be thinner or the circles under their eyes be larger; these, too, become a horror. And how shameful that I have permitted them to co-operate with me in the erection of this fantastic fiction, how shameful that I should have submitted to this group-assumption of so much that cannot be assumed! Do these monsters dream, with their eyes shut and their mouths open, of the North Star hung aloft at our masthead: do they dare to reach out, with heroically destructive hand, towards that sparkle of consciousness, with intent to destroy? Do they ever for a moment think of looking down, through their own eyes in the handglass, to the glorious Gehenna which we are?

But suppose—as I pace to and fro on the Kerman rugs, and glance now at one picture on the wall and now at another—suppose that instead of a step-by-step approach to destruction I were to plunge into it all at once, like Empedocles into Etna. Could I not, simply by an effort of will, go mad? Could I not, like a watchmaker, in a moment's exasperation, thrust a violent scissor-blade into the heart of the delicate mechanism? Not, of course, by anything so simple as a mere physical action; but rather, by an action of the mind on itself. Presumably, this would have to be an act of forgetting. I would have to forget who and what I am, why I am here, what this room is, these pictures, this floor on which I pace—why the room is square rather than spherical, why I am myself shaped as I am—and with these things, also, all sense of unity and continuity. Would this not be possible? Suppose, as I now begin to prepare myself for bed and sleep, I were to concentrate with particular ferocity of imagination on some one detail. For example, I have now shut myself in my bathroom, and as I brush my teeth I notice, reflected in the mirror, the knob of the door behind me. It is a brass knob, perfectly commonplace. On the top surface of it, a little to one side, the electric light is reflected as a small bead of brightness. Below it is the dark keyhole, and to one side of it the glass towel-rack on which hang two soiled towels. All these things seem suddenly absurd: but it is the doorknob on which I choose to exercise my imagination, for I already begin to foresee that it is in a foreordained sense the key to the whole situation. I stare at the knob, narrowing my eyes, at the same time aware of my own reflection in the mirror, and of something in my expression which is already a curious mixture of insanity and fright. I have stopped brushing my teeth: I stare at the knob with my toothbrush in air: an extraordinary thrill of horror goes coldly and slowly up my spine and seems to burst, like a tiny cold little rocket, somewhere at the base of my skull. For what I have now realised, acutely and profoundly, and with a mystic terror which is complete almost to the point of irremediable madness, is that this odd round little object of brass is my only remaining means of egress, not only from this room, but from this idea which is at present myself. I have come to the brink of chaos. Another slightest step, and I am lost. If I continue to stare for another five seconds at the knob, further narrowing my eyes (and *ipso facto* narrowing my consciousness), I shall cease to know what the knob is for, and will at once, finding myself trapped, go mad with a kind of animal madness. I will dash

myself against the walls, scream, fall exhausted; and falling, fall forever out of time and space into my own Gehenna.

Instead, I drop my gaze. I finish brushing my teeth. Not that I am really afraid to pursue the hallucination (if hallucination it truly is), but that I have a cunning notion of putting myself still further to the test. What I have now foreseen is that fearful moment when, before opening the door, I shall reach up my hand and extinguish the light. Again the cold little rocket bursts slowly in my skull, scattering its little seeds of death: the void whistles beneath me; I am absolutely alone in a world of which the only tenable principle is horror. I take a last look at myself in the mirror, calmly, detachedly, without any trace either of pity or amusement. There I am: with the scar on my forehead, the rusty gnarled eyebrows, the fine red spider-veining in my cheeks, and my two hands resting on the marble edge of the basin. Is my name Smith? But how preposterous. What on earth is a Smith? Would the Pole Star know me? Would the Pleiads take off their hats to me, or a jury of molecules pronounce me a unit? In short, would the universe admit that it had produced me, or assume the slightest responsibility for me?

No, the question is no sooner asked than laughed at. It is obvious enough that these Smiths are an accident, a freak, an absurdity, a mere bad dream. Billions of years ago, in some minor interstellar clash, or some streamlike catalysis of unimaginable vapours, purposeless and terrible, there occurred a momentary conception of these funny little Smiths; the principle which created me is already dead; I am merely the posthumous life of that concept. In reality, I was dead before I was born. Belatedly, I see myself in the mirror, recognise my fatuity, have just time to laugh at myself, and am gone.

And so, I turn out the light. I am in pitch darkness. Not a single thing is visible. And suddenly, with an extraordinary sense of power and wisdom, I reach out an automatic and precisely directed hand, touch and turn the knob, and am released. Escaping one approach to Gehenna, I move at once unhesitatingly towards another: for now I stretch myself in bed, once again boldly extinguish a light, close my eyes, and begin to sink through slow turmoils of sound and sense to a dream. In this dream, I am standing before a small glass aquarium, square, of the sort in which goldfish are kept. I observe without surprise that there is water in one half of it but not in the other. And in spite of the fact that there is no partition, this water holds itself upright in its own half of the tank, leaving the other half empty. More curious than this, however, is the marine organism which lies at the bottom of the water. It looks, at first glance, like a loaf of bread. But when I lean down to examine it closely, I see that it is alive, that it is sentient, and that it is trying to move. One end of it lies very close to that point at which the water ends and the air begins: and now I realise that the poor thing is trying, and trying desperately, to get into the air. Moreover, I see that this advancing surface is as if sliced off and raw: it is horribly sensitive: and suddenly, appalled, I realise that the whole thing is simply—consciousness. It is trying to escape from the medium out of which it was created. If only it could manage this —! But I know that it never will; it has already reached, with its agonised sentence, as far as it can; it stretches itself forward, with minute and pathetic convulsions, but in vain; and suddenly I am so horrified at the notion of a consciousness which is pure suffering, that I wake up . . . The clocks are striking two.

Central Asian Wanderings

Riddles of the Gobi Desert. By Sven Hedin. Routledge. 18s.

THIS IS A BEWILDERING BOOK. For it is only an interim report. The story of the beginning of the expedition which it describes has been told in an earlier book. And the end of it is not yet. Then the expedition is not one compact body; but a number of expeditions rather slenderly connected with one another. And the leader does not lead, but organises—and organises not from one definite base but from a number of different bases, now at the capital of a distant province of the Chinese Empire, now at Peking, now at Nanking and even as far afield as Boston and Stockholm. And where the different members of the expeditions are and what they are doing while Sven Hedin is, through the force of hard circumstances, being driven literally round the world, it is a strain on the reader to discover.

One thing, however, he soon discovers, namely, the indefatigability, and resource and enthusiasm of Sven Hedin himself. This great Central Asian explorer has one valuable—one essential—quality in a leader. He is absolutely convinced that the enterprise upon which he is engaged is the one and only event of real importance in world-history taking place at the moment. The great Empires of China and Russia may be in the throes of rebirth into Republics. This is but a passing episode. The really important thing is to know the course of the air-currents in the Gobi Desert, what is the latest divergence of the peripatetic Tarim River, and to discover cousins of dinosaurs, the remains of men more ancient than any found before, and any traces of Chinese cities long since buried in the sands of the desert. And it was because Sven Hedin had this overpowering faith in the importance of his mission, and also because he was a very human leader and possessed of remarkable tact and pertinacity in dealing with suspicious and obstructive Chinese officials, that he was able to keep his expeditions in the field in the midst of revolutions and in the face of banditry. The reader is exasperated at the incoherence of the story and he has to fumble about on the map to discover with difficulty the whereabouts of the different expeditions. But he soon comes to admire the loyalty of the leader, not only to his mission but to his men. And the men were evidently worthy of that loyalty. They were mostly strong, brave, honest Swedes—nine of them. In addition there were six Chinese, one German, one Russian and one Dane. They all seem to have been infected by the same enthusiasm as their leader. And the endurance with which they faced the terrible hardships of travel in Mongolian winters and the courage they

showed when imprisoned were worthy of the sturdy stock to which they belonged.

The full results of the whole enterprise are not yet known. But this book contains a report by Nils Horner of the discovery of the new Lop Nor which was the outstanding geographical result of the expedition. And Sven Hedin himself gives an account full of interest of his visit to inner Eastern Mongolia.—where he found the age-long struggle between the pastoral nomadic Mongols and the agricultural industrious Chinese still in progress. Political difficulties were the main obstacles Hedin had to encounter and he overcame them with success. But one is left wondering whether he was altogether wise in having the different expeditions in progress at the same time. They do not seem to have supplemented and complemented one another in the field. And perhaps as good results with less risk might have been obtained by sending forth a series of independent expeditions at different times, each concentrating upon its own particular line of investigation—one, like Sven Hedin of old on the geography, another, like Aurel Stein on the archaeology, and so on. Anyhow the poor reader would benefit from such a procedure and would be able to follow each with undistracted attention.

FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND.

Anonymous

These have their appointed places; knowing
The time decreed, their own habitual station;
Responsive to a coming and a going;
Nodding to barmaids, equal to situation.
Two at the pictures, two in the pub, and two
Harnessed in two-form, love-linked in the lane:
Marching in clock formation these are who
Pin charts on walls, embark by aeroplane
For a known destination; meeting friends
At every airport (careful to avoid
A hostile landing, fearful lest their ends
Should falsify beginnings, be decoyed
To crash in the desert, signals wrongly heard:
Pinned under twisted steel, a ghastly fame.)
These are inheritors: living, speak no word;
Tenant a body; dying, vacate a name.

A. DESMOND HAWKINS

Books and Authors

Cavaliers and Roundheads

Charles the First, King of England. By Hilaire Belloc. Cassell. 16s.

John Hampden's England. By John Drinkwater. Thornton Butterworth. 15s.

John Hampden. By Hugh Ross Williamson. Hodder and Stoughton. 12s. 6d.

Reviewed by G. K. CHESTERTON

THESE talks, I suppose, are really talks about how to read books. Now I have decided, after some hesitation, to protest against what I consider a very bad case of not knowing how to read books—a case that may seem personal and even controversial, though it has really nothing to do with controversy. It has to do with how to read books.

I have before me a few books on Cavaliers and Roundheads, and I shall begin with Mr. Belloc's book on *Charles the First, King of England*, because it is a perfect example of what I mean. English people are not getting the good out of Mr. Belloc's books as books, because there is a stupid journalistic legend that he is a partisan. It is totally untrue. There are things on which Mr. Belloc disagrees with his countrymen; but he is most emphatically not a man repeating the views of his party and insisting on your agreeing with them; he is a man advancing very original views entirely his own and you are perfectly free to disagree with them. Many of his party do disagree with them; but you might as well read them and realise that they are new.

We hear a good deal nowadays about resistance to new ideas. It seems to mean entirely certain negative and sceptical ideas that are not new at all. A man who disbelieves in God, a man who disbelieves in marriage, or disbelieves in the duty of fighting for his country, may be right or wrong, but he is not new. All the arguments against Providence are in the Book of Job, all the arguments against immortality are in St. Thomas Aquinas, satires against marriage, and denunciations of war can be found in the most ancient pagan literature. What we commonly call modern ideas are all very ancient ideas; but if you want one or two new ideas you will find them in certain books, incidentally Mr. Belloc's book, and you can accept them or not as you choose. But they are not the stock-in-trade of a party. Mr. Belloc is opposed to Socialism, but his 'Servile State' is not an attack on Socialism or any sort of State tyranny; it is an entirely original economic theory, by which our social reforms tend, not to Socialism, but actually to the ancient status of masters and slaves. Mr. Belloc is a Catholic, but most Catholic writers, for instance, have described Queen Elizabeth as a tyrant. Mr. Belloc's whole point is that Queen Elizabeth was not a tyrant, but a victim of tyranny. Or again, Mr. Belloc does dislike Prussia, and, naturally, prefers France; but the friends and foes of Prussia alike say that Bismarck's triumph was that he achieved the union of the German people. Mr. Belloc insists that Bismarck's triumph was that he prevented the union of the German people. If all the Germans had united, it would have been under Austria; Bismarck made sure that his Empire should be not large enough, but small enough, to leave the leadership to Prussia.

Now, all those are ideas to be judged in themselves, in books that you should read for yourselves. And it is not reading a book for yourself to open it with a newspaper prejudice that the writer writes nothing but Popish pamphlets when, in fact, he does nothing of the sort. So it is with this book on Charles I. It is not new to be on the side of Charles I, for Charles I himself, at least, remained loyally on the side of Charles I. It is not new to be on the side of Cromwell, for Cromwell was very much on the side of Cromwell. But nearly everybody will look at this book to see whether Mr. Belloc is a Cavalier or a Roundhead, instead of reading the book to agree or disagree with certain rather new and interesting views on history. What he suggests, for instance, substantially is this. The worst that can be said of Charles I is that he stood for modern ideas; the best that can be said for the Parliament is that it stood for old ideas. Now that point will probably be missed, not because it is partisan—I know of no party that has supported it—but simply because it is unfamiliar. It will take a long time to get people, I do not say to agree with it, but even to disagree with it.

In short, Mr. Belloc is not a partisan of the old Cavalier party, but he does doubtless dislike the fanaticism of the extreme Calvinist Party which led it to butcher prisoners and women and children. Does anybody like it very much? But anyhow his allusions to such things are quite brief and incidental; yet he devotes pages and pages to a perfectly fair and full statement of the case for Hampden and the refusal of Ship Money. It was quite a good case, but what was the case? It was that hitherto in history heavy taxation had been rare, and Parliament as a mediæval institution accepted it with reluctance. Mediæval men were not taxed all the time and to any extent, as we happy modern men are today. The King paid for everything out of his own large revenue, and seldom asked for more; but Charles I

asked for more—and why? Why, because he was more like a modern statesman building the strong modern State, with its vast expenditure, its centralised power of police, its general claim to be what we call a great Power in Europe. If the Parliament was right, it was right for preserving an antiquated mediæval thrift; if the King was wrong, he was wrong for introducing the great services and taxes of the modern world.

Now you will not find it easy to get that idea into some people's heads, because it is a new idea. Not because it is a Popish idea; on the contrary, if it praises the King, it only praises a Protestant King for waging a war on behalf of Protestants. That, by the way, is a big fact that is often forgotten. It is very doubtful whether Queen Elizabeth was really a champion of Protestantism in Europe, but it is certain that Charles I was a champion of Protestantism in Europe. He actually wanted the ship money to build ships in order to rescue the Huguenots, the French Protestants, from being besieged by a Cardinal and a Catholic King. Surely it is not Popery that makes Mr. Belloc support the King in that. The truth is that the King was a practical Protestant, and the Puritans were impractical or impracticable Protestants. While they were talking nonsense and calling poor old Laud a Papist for wearing the plain surplice that all Anglican parsons now wear, he was conducting a crusade to defend Protestant Rochelle against Papistical Paris.

It happens that another very distinguished modern man of letters has just published a book on the fairest and finest of the antagonists of Charles. Mr. John Drinkwater has produced a very interesting book called *John Hampden's England*. There is nothing, as I have said, to be objected against any such books because they are on this side or on the other side. Mr. Belloc himself insists that there is a case for the other side, but those who write thus are unfortunate in so far as it is the traditional side. Those who regard Hampden as a hero of freedom are following the familiar tradition of English history, just as Hampden himself was following the old economic tradition of mediæval Parliaments. But Charles I was more modern than Hampden, and Mr. Belloc is more modern than Mr. Drinkwater. I need not say that Mr. Drinkwater's book is written with admirable literary capacity and effect, and does full justice to its subject, but my object here, as I have said, is to point out certain needs. The need for reading really original books for the sake of their really original ideas, whether we agree with them or not.

Now about Mr. Drinkwater's book on Hampden, and another recent book on Hampden, by Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson, which naturally goes along with it, my very simple impression is this. These books are simply, solely and entirely partisan. Not stupidly partisan, not unscrupulously partisan, but fundamentally partisan; a good speech made by a good advocate. There are no ideas in them except partisan ideas, and these are not specially new ideas. Mr. Drinkwater in this book is merely a Roundhead; Mr. Belloc, in his book, is not merely a Cavalier, he is a great many other things, including a man with a theory of his own, which you can throw away if you like, but which is not merely the old Cavalier theory or the old Catholic theory.

All three books are well worth reading—Mr. Williamson's book contains some most interesting material—but why is Mr. Belloc called partisan when Mr. Williamson is entirely and solely partisan? The answer is: because Mr. Williamson's notions are familiar and not new. I rather like it myself. It is pleasant to fancy oneself a boy again and reading Macaulay's *Essays*. Mr. Drinkwater, for instance, calmly calls the Parliamentary cause the popular cause. He says 'The plain fact remains that in the quarrel of which the decision began in the Long Parliament, the Puritans stood for political and personal freedom in England'. Is the fact so very plain? Was it plainest at the moment when they forbade Christmas to be kept even in private houses? Or was it when they drove out the Parliament to get a military minority that would kill the King? Does Mr. Drinkwater know that the King protested that he died for popular liberties, being dragged by mere military violence before an illegal tribunal? But never mind! I like reading Macaulay; but I do not now get new suggestions from Macaulay, though I do from Belloc. I do not necessarily find them true, but I find them suggestive. It is unfortunate for poor Macaulay that he has been rather badly wounded in the house of his friends—but I may leave that to the Macaulay dynasty. What I want to emphasise is that we should read books as books, and consider ideas as ideas—especially new ideas—and I have found new ideas, which I am not sure I accept, in the book about Charles I, but none in the books about Hampden.

The Listener's Book Chronicle

Mass Spectra and Isotopes. By F. W. Aston Arnold. 15s.

DR. ASTON HAS WRITTEN A BOOK which will be bought or borrowed by all students of physics and chemistry interested in atoms. Its subject matter cannot of necessity interest a very wide public, but for the scientific reader this is the book of the moment and deservedly so. A chemical element is said to have 'isotopes' when the atoms composing it have different masses. The news that atoms could be identical in all chemical properties and yet differ in so fundamental a physical property as mass, burst upon the world of science in 1912. This idiosyncrasy was at first believed to be confined to the chosen race of the heavy radioactive elements, but Sir J. J. Thomson and Dr. Aston indicated in 1913 that isotopes might be a property of all elements. Since the War Dr. Aston has done one of the most remarkable and sustained individual pieces of investigation in science by making this indication a certainty. Eleven years ago he collected his results in book form; he had then investigated about 30 elements. Two years later, in a second edition, he had extended the work to about twenty more. Now after an interval of nine years comes a new book which gives the latest results and views, with a full account of the experimental technique. All the elements except some of the 'rare-earths' and a few others have now been done. For years Dr. Aston was the only worker in the field. The investigation required a combination of art and science, of patience and care, whose rarity precluded competitors or even co-workers; Dr. Aston with his instrument, the 'mass-spectrograph', had to do everything himself. Latterly other workers with a 'magnetic-spectrograph' and the time-honoured spectroscope have confirmed and supplemented Dr. Aston's results. These other instruments have been of particular value in extending our knowledge of the exact masses of light elements.

At first the results astonished people by the complexity of what had been regarded as simple. Mercury, for example, instead of having one kind of atom only, was revealed as having nine kinds. The mass of each was determined with an accuracy which occasionally reaches one in ten thousand; the relative abundance of the different species was also accurately found. Since the discovery of the neutron and the positive electron (the 'positron'), and of the artificial disintegrations which occur in light atoms, the results on isotopes have become of increasing interest. It is really important now to know to one in ten thousand the masses of the atoms of helium, of boron, of beryllium, or of the new hydrogen isotope, of mass 2, now called 'deutogen'. Nowhere in the book, however, does the author indulge in theorising. He gives his own results; he gives the results of others. They are admirably discussed and well set out for reference. Where he feels the subject can be better described by others than by himself he has called in the help of these others. The especial temptation towards atom-building with the results has been resisted. His attitude might be: Here are the facts as accurately as I can get them. They are obviously interesting and, no doubt, important, but it is not for me to go beyond them. This is eminently a scientific attitude; and with a book like the present one it ensures a permanent value for it, despite the changes and advances which the future is sure to bring.

Sir Anthony Sherley. Edited by Sir Denison Ross Routledge. 12s. 6d.

The present edition of Sir Anthony Sherley's travels gains distinction from the fact that it has been produced, with a biographical introduction, by that eminent scholar and orientalist, Sir Denison Ross. Neither the petty errors nor the gross exaggerations of the early travellers are allowed to lead the modern reader astray, for the scholarly annotations of the editor permit of no deception. Of the care and often laborious investigation entailed in editing narratives of this nature one example will suffice. In order to correct a false statement that Sherley was hanged at Venice in 1612, Sir Denison has taken the trouble to check the names of those who met this fate in Venice in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Indeed, no stone has been left unturned in order to arrive at the truth, for the accounts of these English travellers have been compared with contemporary Persian manuscripts. Sir Anthony Sherley had a remarkable career. Born in 1565, he first distinguished himself in the skirmish which ended fatally for Sir Philip Sidney. Later, he played a prominent part at the siege of Rouen as a member of the contingent sent by Queen Elizabeth to help Henry of Navarre in his struggles against the League. For his bravery during the siege he was decorated by the French monarch, but, unfortunately, this aroused the ire of Elizabeth, who is reported to have exclaimed: 'I will not have my sheep marked with a strange brand'. After a short buccaneering expedition to the West Indies he set out on his travels to Persia, leaving his native shores in 1597, never

to return. The main object of this journey was to persuade the Shah that an alliance with the western powers against the Ottoman Sultan would be to the advantage of Persia. Entering the service of the Shah, he was appointed ambassador and returned to Europe *via* Moscow and Archangel, with letters to the Pope, the Emperor, and other western potentates. Eventually, after exciting adventures, not the least of which was his imprisonment in Venice, he settled down in the service of the King of Spain, who appointed him General of the Mediterranean Seas and member of the Council of Naples. His active career ended in 1610, at the age of forty-five, for, an adventurer in more senses than one, he found he could not fool even the monarchs of Europe all the time. In the words of his biographer: 'He was an inveterate and unscrupulous intriguer, a sententious hypocrite devoid of all real sentiment, being incapable of single-minded devotion to any person or cause. He had all the natural instincts of a buccaneer, and his cupidity was only equalled by his extravagance. On the other hand, he must have possessed great physical courage and a reckless love of adventure. He was certainly no fool, as is proved by his own writings which reveal a rare insight into the Oriental mind, keen powers of observation, and a retentive memory'.

A History of the French People

By Charles Seignobos. Cape. 12s. 6d.

In this book Professor Seignobos, who has occupied for many years the Chair of Modern History in the University of Paris, essays a very difficult task. His aim is to get behind the sensational events and the famous actors and to describe the life-experience, ideas, sentiments, usages, and institutions of the French people throughout the ages. 'English readers', he says in his preface, 'accustomed to see history treated in the form of biography, will be disappointed at finding so few details about famous people'. It is, indeed, one of the least personal histories ever written. Even Richelieu and Napoleon obtain little more than a casual and passing mention. Battles are hardly mentioned and wars are no more than a background against which the life of the people is painted. Such a book inevitably lacks the stimulus of vivid narrative, but it deserves the serious attention of students of social evolution.

It is a social history but not in the main an economic history. A word is worth saying on this point, for most of those among us who desiderate what they call social history, depreciate politics at the expense of economics. Professor Seignobos, on the other hand, holds that, until the last eighty years, political factors counted for much more than economic factors in conditioning the social life of the French people. A prominent position is also given to religious development. On every subject the author writes with an Olympian detachment. It would be impossible to deduce from this book that he is either for or against the Revolution, either for or against the Reformation, though it is possible to detect a tinge of regret in his recording of the fact that the French monarchy failed to follow the example of the English and establish a national Church on the basis of a theological compromise. When writing of the literary antecedents of the French Revolution he emphasises the debt of all the French *philosophes* to the theory and practice of eighteenth century England. Even the famous *Encyclopædia* was, as he says, only an imitation of the venture of an English publisher. The scope of the book extends down to the present day, though the twentieth-century period is no more than glanced at and the history of the Great War is 'taken as read'.

The Scotland of Our Fathers. By E. S. Haldane MacLehose. 12s. 6d.

Miss Haldane's chronicle does for Scotland in the nineteenth century very much what Mr. Henry Grey Graham's did for Scotland in the eighteenth, with as little reference as his book to party politics and as much to the life of the people. But Miss Haldane has the additional advantage of possessing so much first-hand knowledge—derived from her own experiences and memories and the oral tradition of the countryside—to add to the more formal knowledge derived from written records. The historical facts—the housing statistics, the records of the Church secessions and re-unions (there is a quite admirable diagram to illustrate the incredibly complicated course of Presbyterian sects from 1690 to 1929), the infant mortality figures, etc.—are reinforced by such individual pieces of information as that Russian sailors from the Port of Leith used to drink the oil in the street lamps of Edinburgh; that Highlanders shopping in Inverness would, when nails were scarce, take home a few for their coffins; that young women in Banffshire used to roll the distaff on their bare thighs, as it was supposed not to spin so well over clothes. The record suffers a little from its arrangement: Miss Haldane takes the various subjects one by one, social services, transport, rural life, etc., and it is not always easy to follow which end of

the century she is at—or whether indeed she is in it at all, for she often goes back to the eighteenth. An intelligent foreigner, for instance, who knew little of Scotland, might well imagine from page 128 that Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk was a contemporary of Sydney Smith and Jeffrey; or, from page 176, that Sir Robert Lorimer came not long after James Gibbs.

It is, of course, a record of change in every branch of the people's life. Miss Haldane records the changes very clearly, though she does not always make it clear whether she values or deprecates them. It is possible, however, to draw up a sort of balance sheet of progress. On the credit side, nearly all her readers would agree to put the social and humanitarian improvements: the change from Glasgow with 24 public wells for 83,769 people to Glasgow drinking Loch Katrine (though one old lady complained the new water had no smell); from Edinburgh with refuse chucked into the streets to Edinburgh with a decent sanitary system; from a wasteful infield-and-outfield method of cultivation to scientific cattle- and crop-raising; from a Presbyterianism on the whole respectable and lethargic to a Presbyterianism so energetic that, by faith and voluntary giving, and not by state aid and endowment, a great new Free Church came into being; from a coach journey between Edinburgh and London taking usually 14 days on bumpy roads to 8 hours by rail; from public executions, body-snatchings, children working 17 hours a day, combinations of workmen forbidden, to conditions as we know them which, though highly susceptible to improvement, have abolished these particular ills. Then come the doubtful items: which side of the balance sheet they go is largely a matter of individual opinion. Such are the change in the educational system, from the independent parish schools, dating from before Knox, to a state system controlled from London (from 1839 to 1885 Scotland had no separate Education Department) and the decline of the vernacular in the upper and middle classes. Clearly on the debit side stand such things as the decay of country civilisations as, for instance, that so delightfully recorded by Elizabeth Grant of Rothiemurchus; the loss of direct cultural contact with the Continent (in the eighteenth century Voltaire could say that 'today rules of taste in all the arts, from epic poems to gardening, come to us from Scotland') and the increasing dependence on England in government, fashion and opinions—evidenced by such things as the increasing number of Scots who to make their mark had to go to England, the disappearance (from Scotland) of many of the Edinburgh publishers and literary journals; and the snobbish habit of sending middle-class boys to English public schools (to acquire an 'English' accent) rather than the High Schools or Academies of their own towns. Many of these changes, it should be noticed, are really in part the outcome of the changes in the credit category. The blackest item in the account, though, is the change in the Highlands—a change already beginning early in the century, which at the end made them safe for the sportsman, and a desolation for their own people. The depopulation of the Highlands may have been an inevitable economic process; but it need not have been such a cruel one.

One protest must be made against a very good book. On page 130 Burns is referred to as a 'man without education beyond that of the good literature which was open to every Scottish lad by the constant reading of the Bible'. Burns read, referred to, and in his letters frequently quoted from, Shakespeare, Sheridan, *Tristram Shandy*, Molière, Racine, Corneille, *The Wealth of Nations*, Angola's *Histoire Indienne*, Voltaire, Milton, Percy's *Reliques*, etc. Was this not 'education'? He wrote as a member of a very highly conscious literary tradition; and Miss Haldane is far too good a Scot to perpetuate, even unintentionally, the ridiculous unlettered-ploughboy-legend of Burns.

Soviet Literature. Edited by George Reavey and Marc Slonim. Wishart. 8s. 6d.

This is an exceedingly scholarly piece of work, indispensable to the student of Soviet literature. The team is Mr. Slonim, an emigré, and Mr. Reavey, an Irishman who knows Russia well and spent his childhood there. They have combined to pack into 430 pages a comprehensive survey of the many currents in post-revolutionary Russian prose, poetry and criticism. Best are the critical introduction and the notes which stand at the head of each extract, like labels on the specimens in a butterfly cabinet. Mr. Slonim shows a wide knowledge of the influence of pre-revolutionary writers on their successors and Mr. Reavey a sympathetic understanding of the relation between the various cliques and cross-currents in Soviet literature and the great upheavals going on in the society that surrounds them. He explains, for example, the prominence in the early days of experimenters and innovators of all kinds who had nothing in common with the new classes coming into power—the workers and peasants—except a sort of surface rebellion against established convention. He relates the recent period of sterility and exclusive concentration on content at all costs rather than style to the tremendous mobilisation of all forces for work in the early days of the Five Year Plan; and he shows how the present slackening of tension and reawakening of interest in skill of writing is paralleled by the change-over from heavy industry to articles of consumption

ushered in by the Second Five Year Plan. The book is, however, less attractive to the general reader. The selections have wisely been made from material for the most part not published in English and some of them—those of Babel and Zoshchenko for instance—are real gems. But readability is handicapped by the fact that—probably in order to make the samples really representative—much of the prose consists not of short stories or sketches but of extracts from novels. It is difficult to gain an idea of many authors from their style alone, particularly from their style in translation nearly always by the same hand, and some of the extracts seem as dead as the self-same butterflies after killing-bottle and pin have finished with them. Such a lot of the individuality of a novelist depends upon the shape of his whole, and it is a pity that the introductory notes to each extract were not still further strengthened by some kind of précis of the context. In just the same way, although the critical manifestos at the end of the book are invaluable to the student, the general reader would have obtained a better idea of the standpoint of Marxist criticism from a single example of its application, perhaps the discussion by some modern Soviet critic of a work well known in England such as *War and Peace*. None the less, the book contains many good things, and is a praiseworthy exercise in the modern publishing art of compression.

The Training of Taste in the Arts and Crafts

By J. Littlejohns & A. Needham. Pitman. 12s. 6d.

This book is divided into two parts. The first describes a series of tests in aesthetic appreciation. The second discusses the equipment necessary to the teacher who would teach appreciation, including knowledge of art, material for tests, and outlined lessons. There is much interesting matter in part one, although some of the test material is open to criticism. Children from 11-15, it seems, have bad taste, but discrimination improves as they get older—a conclusion borne out by other tests. No reference is made to the taste of children under 11, which is a pity, as there is other evidence to show that children of 6-11 have a sensibility which suffers eclipse from 11-15, and is only partially recaptured with adolescence. In these tests boys exhibit much better taste than girls. This result is not confirmed by a test carried out elsewhere some years ago when 2,000 children were tested. It is clear that much evidence must be considered before trustworthy conclusions can be deduced.

The second part of the book is of doubtful value. Taste is declared to be the most important element in artistic creation, whereas good taste implies detachment and critical insight—qualities that may have little connection with the absorption of creative energy. Children who do excellent work are often blind to beauty and ugliness in the art of others. In the interest of their own work it is probably wise to leave them to live the imaginative life until the critical faculty develops at sixteen or seventeen. Good art teaching enhances sensitive discrimination. A strong case can be made out, in the interests, not only of the individual but of the public, for the supplementing of such teaching, later on, by wise guidance in appreciation. But the wisdom of much of the advice given here to teachers is very questionable. Principles of art are frequently illustrated by line drawings that have little relation to the living rhythms of true art. Line drawings and water-colours are also used for tests in the place of photographs and good half-tone reproductions which, failing the originals, alone can convey something of the plastic quality of aesthetic form. Further, the sample lessons provided for teachers imply that those ignorant enough to need them are nevertheless qualified to give instruction in a highly complex subject.

In Search of the Beginning. By M. A. Payne Allenson. 8s.

Miss Payne's previous book, *Oliver Twist*, is now in its third edition, the publishers tell us, and it well deserves to be, for one remembers it as a little classic in its way. It related the regeneration of an old-fashioned orphan institution of the worst kind—a veritable Dickensian picture—by sheer force of love and understanding of children, and was a treasury of child-psychology in the form of a simple narration of events. Her present book will come perhaps as somewhat of a disappointment to those of her readers at any rate who dislike too many words in capitals, and who do not care to have their psychology served up in dialogue form, or as the spoken reflection of an imaginary mouthpiece. The chief speaker is called 'Susan', who, after an unhappy childhood, is found in charge of two children, and sets out to reflect upon the origin and source of all the discords, hatreds, cruelties and neuroses of the human race. She and a girl-friend, 'Tommy', discuss with each other these problems, and arrive at the conclusion that individuals (as well as nations) are not grown-up, and are, moreover, not their real selves but merely 'Masks', in layers of self-deceit; they exist mostly in the infantile state of 'Me' or the childish 'I', while few have reached the adolescent, and fewer still the truly adult stage of spiritual development. They are joined by a third speaker, 'Diana', who has worked in a psychological clinic, and

relates some interesting cases and their cure. With the entry of 'Diana', the book assumes a more practical and less visionary style, and it seems as though, through her, the author were speaking from her personal experience of cases, as distinct from the somewhat esoteric explanations and theories which issue from the mouth of Susan, and therefore to be better fulfilling the object of the book. This object, she tells us in the preface, was to write, following upon her previous book, 'a more detailed account of how to acquire the necessary knowledge underlying the principles for handling children', whereas an ordinary reader starting the book might find himself somewhat befogged in his search by the 'Mask', the 'Me', the 'I', and other signposts on the way. This preference for the less theoretical and more practical parts of the book is, perhaps, purely personal, and some readers may prefer the more mystic way into the New World; but we cannot but regret it, if we feel that thereby the admirable advice which Miss Payne can give may become obscured instead of made more clear. Nevertheless, her writing comes from the heart and is presented with appealing sincerity.

Evolution of Habit in Birds. By Edmund Selous

Constable. 10s.

For detailed observation of birds in their natural surroundings and for true scientific caution in deferring conclusions until these are warranted by a sufficient body of personally accumulated facts, Mr. Edmund Selous is unrivalled. Because of this caution his early works, fascinating though they were as records, have sometimes seemed to lack pattern: it is a natural sequence of the synthetic method that each successive book should leave less ground for this criticism. The habits which he considers in his new book relate to fighting, nest-building, territory, cleanliness, parental care, and the origin of song. One senses throughout that, much as he loves birds, and much therefore as he would welcome evidence of the higher faculties at work in them, he resolutely refuses to blink or suppress a single fact, or to see what he wants to see. Where the facts point him to sex as the stimulus for a habit, he says so boldly. The sentimental and the æsthetic—there are many of both among bird lovers—must blame the facts, not Mr. Selous: he is only a Freud in the realm of bird behaviour where he has to be. His most convincing conclusion in this book concerns the formalising of fighting, which he suggests has come about through the working of natural selection. The wing-raising of snipe, the bowings of stockdoves, the stilted attitudes of challenge adopted by stone curlew have come to take the place of actual deadly combat of which they were probably once a part. In other words, the less harmful energy has gradually taken the place of the more harmful one: there is no Armageddon, only Aldershot. The reasons why Mr. Selous declines to go all the way with the modern 'territorial theory' about bird life are also extremely interesting and are supported by cogent reasoning based on personally observed evidence.

His field notes, which are quoted extensively, are vivid, scrupulous, and to the point: they make the reader share his excitement over the discovery of something really significant. But his 'study' style is often wilfully knotty—a cross between Carlyle and the leader-writer whom the brothers Smith parodied in *Rejected Addresses*; witness phrases like 'The above-alluded-to particular representative' and 'Those desk-reduced flesh-scraped-off skeletons'. He repeatedly digresses to attack what he calls museumology; this digression is sometimes tiresome, but his energy excuses it, and every reader will admire the way in which he stoutly confronts what he calls 'joy-in-deadness' with his own joy in life.

Contemporary Essays. Edited by Sylva Norman Elkin Mathews. 10s. 6d.

Although in her introduction Sylva Norman proposes, as a motto for essayists, Montaigne's 'I do nothing without blitheness', there is in these essays little either of blitheness or of the triviality which is its corresponding fault. Michael Roberts' 'Gubbins on Love' certainly has wit, but it is a keen, bitter wit that is forever turning laughter into thought. Almost all the other essays are uneasy and uncertain, asking many questions and giving few answers. Even their titles, 'The Last Squire', 'The Earth Being Troubled', or 'Anger Against Books', convey something of the disturbance which seems to fill the minds of their authors. It is therefore not unnatural that the least satisfying are those which promise most. In the section very oddly named 'The Visionary Gleam', two of the four, Tangye Lean's 'The Spirit of Death' and Derek Hudson's 'Sable Goddess', are merely set pieces, sparking to order, though in the latter there are some obviously honest and authentic memories which would be very well in an essay of a different type. James Laver, who sets out boldly to explore and report upon the chaos of which he, like the rest, is unceasingly aware, returns with honour if without spoils: but there is certainly nothing visionary about his pleasant and sensible survey of the historic growth of the conception of time. His is perhaps the outstanding piece of work in the whole volume.

It is indeed the Triumph of Time which seems to disturb all these writers. Though many of them are young, all are obsessed with the impermanence of the values and institutions, even the shapes and sounds, to which they are accustomed. They write as though they were at the end of an age: as in fact they are. And even Naomi Mitchison, who alone appears to realise that the end of one age is the beginning of the next, and who writes that we are in 'a muddle and an angry muddle, and yet at the same time a hopeful and glorious muddle out of which something is yet going to be made', is forced to add, 'but not, so far as we can see, by us'. There is good writing and careful thinking in these essays, but, as Kate O'Brien says of the East Anglian landscape, 'if you have come out to be astonished and to make great exclamations, you have come to the wrong place'.

The Psalms for Modern Life. With Drawings

by Arthur Wragg. Selwyn and Blount. 6s.

Here is something unusual, vital, sincere. The artist has set himself, in the spirit of a prophet, to illustrate the Psalms, not in conventional or traditional fashion, but in their relevance to our life today and its problems. As a book of meditations, reflecting our most varied moods and experiences, the Psalms lend themselves to imaginative pictorial treatment, and Mr. Wragg has made the most of the drama, pathos, and vision of his text. His illustrations, in cartoon-like masses of black and white, give a new turn to verses that have grown so old and venerable that they have lost some of their power to strike our attention. His pictures make us turn again to face the realities presented to us by the Psalmist. The old motives of greed, hate, envy, cruelty, lust, in humanity are unmasked, and we are shown their results in terms of human suffering. The artist is not a propagandist in any direct sense, though some of his drawings could be used as propaganda against social evils of our day—and above all against war. But it is clear that his intention is not to attack any particular evil, so much as to call us back from false standards of life generally, to the things that count, the old virtues which the Psalmist strove for; and which are overlaid in modern life. Therefore, the highest praise we can give this book is to say that the pictures truly match the text, and that no one can see them without pondering again over the verses they illustrate.

The Worker's Point of View

The Hogarth Press. 4s. 6d.

The Worker's Point of View is a symposium, and the writers are men who have earned their living at some time or other by their hands. The description of conditions and problems of their work is therefore from first-hand knowledge and experience and in this lies the chief value of the book. In the past, working-class conditions have far too frequently been treated by members of the intelligentsia who have not the slightest practical experience to support them, and yet it is precisely such writers as these who are ready to adopt extreme attitudes and are prepared in theory to go to greater lengths than the man whose knowledge comes from actual contact with the conditions in question. As Mr. Cramp so admirably puts it in his preface to the book, the former 'is invariably far more revolutionary in his expressions and far less aware of the immediate consequences of any action which may be urged, than is the worker, the difference being accounted for by the fact that the trade unionist probably knows already what it is to be up against the grim facts of hard living and unemployment'. The academic writer 'having only heard and read of these things, looks upon revolution as an adventure, and thinks only of the romantic side of the exploit'.

Mr. Cramp, who himself rose from the ranks without the advantages of a university career, was a cultured man in the truest sense of the word, having a sane view of life and a balanced judgment. If adult educational institutions could produce more of such men as he, their establishment and work would be wholly justified. In this book the reader feels intimately acquainted with the outlook of miner, mechanic, plasterer, compositor, engineer and steel-worker; these are the six trades covered by the symposium. It is, of course, dangerous to generalise and maintain that all economic and industrial problems are more clearly stated and the solution more likely to be reached when taken in hand by the worker. Certain reservations are necessary. A worker may lose contact with his fellows—he may, for instance, have been taken from his environment for the purpose of receiving higher academic training and may find it difficult to retain the sympathy which he may have once felt. Even though he is among them he is not of them. One of the best sections of the book is that written by Mr. J. H. Mitchell, which ably puts the miner's point of view, covering such details as the man's opposition to the pithead baths. But the book in general is one which should be of some value to all those studying industrial conditions as well as of interest to those of the general public who are anxious to secure a knowledge of working class conditions at first hand.